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Respect the gods, but keep them at a distance.
CONFUCIUS.

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The pure Earth is situated in the pure Heavens.

The soul which has passed through life with purity and moderation obtains the gods for fellow-travellers and guides, and rests in the abode suited to it. There are indeed many and wonderful places in the Earth, and it is neither of such a kind nor of such a magnitude as is supposed by those who are accustomed to speak of the Earth, as I have been persuaded by a certain person.

SOCRATES.

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HOW I LEFT THE WORLD TO COME FOR THAT WHICH IS.

When will you take us as a dear father takes his son by both hands, O ye gods, for whom the sacred grass is trimmed?

Whither now? On what errand of yours are you going, in heaven, not on earth?

RIG-VEDA-SANHITA.

The stars tell all their secrets to the flowers, and if we only knew how to look around us we should not need to look above. But man is a plant of slow growth, and great heat is required to bring out his leaves. He must be promised a boundless futurity to induce him to use aright the present hour. In youth fixing his eyes on those distant worlds of light, he promises himself to attain them, and there find the answer to all his wishes. His eye grows keener as he gazes, a voice from the earth calls it downward, and he finds all at his feet.

MARGARET FULLER.

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HOW I LEFT THE WORLD TO COME FOR THAT WHICH IS.

EARLY in my childhood, my parents entrusted me to the care of the well-known guide, Mr. Bunyan, to be taken from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City, where they themselves had long resided. My venerable and kind guide beguiled the way with interesting stories, but could not prevent its being a hard journey. Indeed, when we came to the chief difficulties and dangers of the road, he would generally disappear from my side, confessing that he could not render me any assistance, and joining me again only where the way became pleasant and plain. So ere I reached my teens I had struggled in the Slough of Despond, and before they had passed had conversed alternately with Messrs. Greatheart and Feeblemind, encountered Apollyon, and seen the inside of Doubting Castle.

At last, not without some wounds and bruises, I fell swooning at the gates of the city. On waking, I found myself inside, surrounded by many friends and relatives, who warmly congratulated me on my escape from the City of Destruction and the perils of the way, and had much to say in praise of the Lord of the city in which they lived. The title of this great potentate was, I learned, the Prince of Otherworldliness, and my sole occupation would be to sit upon a purple cloud with a golden trumpet, through which I was to utter perpetually glorifications of his magnificence, and inform him how much reason he had to be satisfied with himself.

For a time this was pleasant enough. The purple cloud acted as a screen against many disagreeable objects. The dens of misery and vice, the hard problems of thought, the blank misgivings of the wanderers amid worlds unrealised, were all shut out from view; and though I was expected, as a matter of form, to say I was a miserable sinner, it was with the distinct understanding that I was all the more our Prince's darling for saying so.

At length, however, the novelty of all this began to wear off. I felt my arms getting stiff with disuse. It seemed to me that our Prince must be sufficiently aware by that time of his grandeur, and it appeared almost egotistical to call his attention further to my own insignificance, besides the doubtful sincerity of doing so while I regarded myself as one of his elect. But, alas, these were but the beginnings of my perception of the drawbacks attending a residence in the domain of Otherworldliness. Reports were constantly reaching us of pilgrims who had perished by the way in a certain pit whose fiery mouth my guide had pointed out to me on the journey from the City of Destruction. I was expected to rejoice in, rather than commiserate, their fate, as being essential to the dignity of our sovereign; but this was very difficult, and the more I reflected on the subject, the more it seemed to me a questionable source of majesty.

As time waxed on, I perceived that our city was not only growing in size, but altering its character. Going one day to the city gate, I found that it had been removed to make way for a much broader entrance, and I met a very miscellaneous crowd coming in. Seeing that they were much fresher in their looks than I had been after the same journey, I conversed with some of them, and learned for the first time that the Celestial Railway had been opened, and that this had led to a tide of immigration. The pilgrim could now travel in a first-class carriage, and his pack be checked through. A pilgrim has since made the world familiar with this result of the enterprise of Mr. Smooth-it-away. His account, however, is, as I have learned, not entirely accurate; for instance, the Slough of Despond was not filled up by volumes of French and German philosophy, but by enormous editions of an English work showing the safest way of investing in Both Worlds. Moreover, it is but just to say that the engineering feat by which the Hill Difficulty was tunnelled is due to Professor Moonshine, whose works showing that the six days of creation mean six geological periods, and that miracles are due to the accelerated workings of natural law, also furnished the material of a patent key, by which many pilgrims are enabled to pass with ease through Doubting Castle. The new pilgrims informed me that most of them had been for some time residing in Vanity Fair, but that, by various measures of conciliation, that fascinating and fashionable resort had become a suburb of the Celestial City, and was incorporated with the domain of Otherworldliness. Having read in Mr. Bunyan's Guide-Book that our city was of pure gold, they had some thoughts of settling in it. Many of them having thus established themselves in our realm, it began to show startling changes. There had been, for instance, no part of my old road along which I had passed more shudderingly than the Plain Ease and Lucre Hill, where I heard the groans of those who had fallen through its treacherous sward into the silver-mines. What was my astonishment now to see a beautiful park of just the same kind, a hill the very image of Lucre Hill, made in the very centre of our city! This place became the fashionable promenade and place of resort. Ladies there displayed the cross as a golden ornament, and all around it was a bazaar, where the pearl of price was dealt in by tradesmen, who rejoiced in the inscription over the park-gates—"Godliness is Gain."

There gradually grew within me a deep misgiving, and I began to dwell on memories of the so-called City of Destruction, on which, as I was surprised to learn, fire had not yet been rained down. One day I got hold of a journal printed in that city. From it I learned that there were things going on there which seemed strangely inconsistent with the bad character I had always heard given to it. Men and women there, so I read, were devoting their energies to the education of the ignorant, the help of the poor; they were searching reverently into the laws of nature; they were celebrating in beautiful poems a Ruler of their city whose name was Love, who sent his rain and sunshine on the evil and the good. There were innocent children passing with laughter and dance into the healthy vigour of maturity. Reason, Liberty, Justice, Wealth, were there advancing, and Science was clearing from the sky of Faith every cloud of fear and superstition.

As I pondered these reports, the purpose grew within me to make an excursion, at least, to that city, which I had left too early in life to know much of personally; and so one day I went to the station and asked for a ticket to the City of Destruction.

Amazed at my request, the station-master informed me that there were no trains running that way for passengers,—they had only arrangements for bringing people away from that accursed place; and he further advised me to be cautious lest I should be put under restraint as a fit subject for the lunatic asylum: there was a flourishing institution of that character in the city.

After this I kept quiet for a time, and tried to be contented with my purple cloud and trumpet; but in vain. I confided to my parents my desire to return for a time to my native place, but they wept at the bare mention of the project, and evidently feared that my wits were going. Again I waited, and sought to believe that it was best to remain where I was. At length, however, there came to me one who spoke with a voice not to be disobeyed. He laid on me a burden, and gave me a shield called Truth, and said: " Henceforth thou shalt be a pilgrim. From a world believing the incredible, adoring where it should abhor, thou shalt depart, never to return. *Whither*, shall be opened to thee as thou shalt journey; *whence*, is already plain."

Then I turned my face toward the old world I had so painfully left. As I drew near the border of our Prince's domain, I was met by one of his officers, who informed me that I should find a bad road, and that the country was almost impassable. " In building the railway by which pilgrims to the

Celestial City now travel so comfortably," he said, "all the disagreeables and dangers they once had to encounter have been heaped on the path you propose to undertake. The dirt taken from the tunnel of the Hill Difficulty you will now find piled across your road. The Slough of Despond, displaced on our line, has settled in the way by which you must go. All the sorrows and pains once besetting the path of Christian now waylay him who would fly in the face of what has become the respectable and popular religion."

Nevertheless, I went on. But before I had reached the verge of the Prince's dominions a large number of his liveried servants ran after me, and began pelting me, crying: "Infidel! Atheist! Neologist! Pantheist! Madman!"

Somewhat bruised, I hastened onward. Soon, however, there stood before me, preparing his darts, a monster, whom I at once recognised. "Why, how is this, Apollyon?" I cried; "when last I encountered you, you were trying to prevent pilgrims from reaching the Celestial City; surely you do not oppose their return?" "Times are changed," he replied; "since the railway has been opened, I have been taken into the employment of the Prince of Otherworldliness." Thereupon he let fly his darts, on each of which was written its name: "Popularity," "Parsonage," "Patronage," "Promotion," and the like. But with the aid of my shield I managed to pass him; and though afterward I had a dreary imprisonment in Doubting Castle, its lock yielded to the key of Trust, which some former pilgrim had dropped on the floor, and I arrived at last within sight of the great city.

But it was yet very distant; and, being weary after my long and toilsome journey, I ventured to approach a house which I saw. As I came nearer I perceived that it was the house of the Interpreter, and for some time I hesitated to go further, apprehending that he too would oppose my return. Remembering, however, that the obstacles to my leaving the Celestial City had been chiefly raised by those who had opposed my journey toward it, I hoped that the Interpreter might also have changed his allegiance, and I knocked at his door. My hope was true. He met me with a hearty welcome, and declared to me that the City of Destruction had changed its character as much as the Celestial City, and that he was anticipating in the future the same class of pilgrims returning thither as those who had once sought the realm of Other-worldliness.

The Interpreter lit his candle and said: "Do you remember the picture I formerly showed you, in a private room, of a very grave person?" "I do, indeed," I said; "and this was the fashion of it: it had eyes lifted up to heaven, the best of books in its hand, the law of truth was written upon its lips, the world was behind its back, it stood as if it pleaded with men, and a crown of gold did hang over its head." "That picture," he said, "gradually became so dingy, that once, when an old artist came hither, I accepted his offer to clean and retouch it; you shall see it as he left it." On entering the well-known room, I saw that the portrait had been changed in several particulars. The grave person's eyes now looked downward; the book, partially closed, was placed on one side; and the world, which had been behind, was now immediately under his eyes, and covered with inscriptions; the crown of gold suspended over his head had changed to luminous dust." When I asked the meaning of this change, the Interpreter said: "I will show you a new scene commanded by this house, which will unfold the significance of the picture." Thereupon, he took me to the top of the house, from which could be seen the two rival cities. What was my surprise to see a dark cloud gathering over the City of Otherworldliness, with lightnings flashing from it, while over the so-called City of Destruction shone a beautiful rainbow! "Thus," said the Interpreter, "that which exalteth itself must be abased, and that which humbleth itself shall be exalted. The city which, from being the domain of the lowly friend of man, the carpenter's son, has been given over to those who care more for bishoprics and fine livings than for mankind, has become the City of Destruction; while that which has cared rather for man whom it can, than for God whom it cannot, benefit, has become the City of Humanity, which shall endure for ever."

The Interpreter then said that, as there were unhappily few pilgrims as yet going in my direction, he would be able to accompany me on a part of the way. I was not so near, he said, as I might suppose. "That great metropolis which you see is not the city you seek; it is Bothworldsburg, and, though commercially connected with the City of Humanity, owns allegiance to the Prince of Otherworldliness, whose powerful agencies therein are marked by its spires. Its inhabitants pass six-sevenths of their time in this world, and during the other seventh pray to their Prince, and protest loudly against taking any thought at all for this life. The confines of Bothworldsburg blend with those of the City of Humanity, which you can hardly trace out from here, and, indeed, may have some difficulty in finding. You must go through the tedious paths of Study, Reality, and Devotion, and when you arrive at the suburbs you will still have to be a pilgrim amid many nights and days before you reach the heart of the city. After arriving there, you will be left a good deal to your own guidance: the inhabitants are very busy; they do not sit on purple clouds blowing golden trumpets. The only prayer to the Lord of that city is work; the only praise is virtue. Its treasures are not obvious, but in hard ores. You will find the pavements golden only when you can transmute them to gold; and only if you have found a pearl to carry in your own breast will its gates become pearl."

Thereupon we set out on our way. Bothworldsburg, in which most of my wanderings occurred, so nearly resembled the metropolis in which these records and reflections are published, that I think it best to use its familiar names and events. This may be somewhat startling at first, and to some may seem even vulgar. But having abandoned my purple cloud, there is nothing better left me, out of which to build my visions, than London clay; and I can only regret it if its importance and capabilities are exaggerated by eyes which have been so long absorbed in otherworldly visions. At any rate, I can promise my reader that we shall be near that lowly vale where the pilgrims listened to the song of the shepherd's boy who "wears more of that herb called heart's-ease in his bosom than he that is clad in silk and velvet," and where, as Mr. Bunyan states on good authority, pearls have been found.

I.

THE HABITAT OF CHRISTIANITY.

To worship in a temple not your own is mere flattery.

CHINESE ANALECTS.

Your scheme must be the framework of the universe; all other schemes will soon be in ruins. The perfect God, in his revelations of himself, has never got to the length of one such proposition as you, his prophets, state. Have you learned the alphabet of Heaven, and can count three? Do you know the number of God's family? Can you put mysteries into words? Do you presume to fable of the ineffable?

THOREAU.

THE HABITAT OF CHRISTIANITY.

IN the city of the Prince of Otherworldliness I had generally passed my Sundays listening to denunciations by his divines of all the people and all the opinions which we had left in the world from which we had escaped. Abandoned by us, it was, of course,—or so these divines asserted,—abandoned by everything good. But on the first Sunday after I had come near the world that is, the Interpreter proposed that we should go to our devotions in a garden of wild animals.

Do not, I pray you, reader, look upon that spot as too vulgar and near for the pilgrim to ask your company to it. Seen with eyes long accustomed to otherworldly sights, it is nothing less than human society in masquerade. These are the perfect shapes of passions; here are the bulls and bears of the Exchange, the diplomatists, the aristocrats in fine plumage. Men will one day twine their laurels about the head that can set these cries and screams to music, and interpret the thousand realms whose open secrets hide in these curious creatures. Every hair on them is a history; a myriad suns burn in their eyes; on their foreheads, as on anvils, thought was fashioned; yonder beautiful woman is the sum of their selected shapes: out of their instincts crystallised at last the crown-jewels of Humanity,—Reason, Love, Worship.

Much did I admire that in this little circuit there was displayed the knowledge and dexterity which had given to each its right environment. Here is a bit of Arctic, there of contiguous Tropic; the fish finds its Southern Sea with the familiar reef, the wading-bird its fish-pond: all are supplied by the art which knows that Nature is commanded by obedience.

"How faithfully," said the Interpreter, "is each animal here inscribed with the liberties and limitations of its habitation! These long bare legs and long neck and bill mean a subsistence by fishing in shallow water; those powerful wings and talons imply heavy prey borne to the mountain-top. Every sharp eye, or velvet foot, or thick neck, assigns a freedom and outlines a prison. Death awaits the most powerful beyond its habitat.

"Are the laws governing man and his institutions less inexorable? Absolutism has disappeared from this country for the same reason that bears have. So animal and human sacrifices have disappeared because the religious habitat they once found here has been destroyed. A tropical bird might be misguided enough to find its way into Windsor Forest some day. Taylor, the Platonic enthusiast, once sacrificed a bull to Zeus in his back parlour. The bird must flutter into some warm room or perish; and the practical worshipper of Zeus must obey his landlady's summons to the police-court.

"Let us imagine, for a moment, an England which has never heard of the Bible or of Christianity. A traveller comes from some foreign land, and describes the religious beliefs of its inhabitants. He represents them as maintaining that many centuries ago Almighty God came down out of heaven and was born as a human infant; that the reason for his doing so was that the human race had sprung from a man and a woman who, by eating an apple he had forbidden them to eat, had brought down a curse upon the whole world, under which every human being is, to the end of time, born utterly depraved, and, unless his or her nature be miraculously changed, must burn in everlasting fire after death. The Creator, unable to mitigate this penalty accruing to mankind for the misdeed of their first parents, was nevertheless moved with pity for humanity thus going on to endless torments, and conceived a scheme for saving them. That scheme was to be himself born on earth, a member of the accursed human family; to prove himself to be God by working wonders which no mortal could work; to take upon himself the sins and curse of the earth and of all its inhabitants; to suffer himself all the pains and penalties which had awaited the whole race of men; and, having thus satisfied the unalterable law, to offer mankind, as the conditions of their salvation, that each one who should by faith in this plan believe that his sins, which deserved eternal torture by fire, had been already suffered for,—who should pray to have the divine suffering vicariously imputed to his particular case, and also glorify God sufficiently for so acting,—should be granted a free pardon for the ancestral sin; while all those who should not personally fulfil these conditions should proceed, as before, into eternal misery, as the just punishment for the eating of the forbidden apple by the first human pair, whatever might be their own moral character.

"What would be the comments of the supposed unchristianised England upon such a narrative as this? and what would be its inferences concerning the government, customs, and physical features of the country in which such a religion prevailed? Not in a fruitful and pleasant land, we should say, could such beliefs spring up, but amid rock and desert, where Nature seemed resting under a curse. It is the faith, we should say, of a people who regard all human suffering, disease, and death as evidences of divine anger; who, being without science, regard all unusual phenomena as expressions of an arbitrary power, and would thus look for miracles to attend any revelation from their deity. They would conceive of the deity as like unto themselves,—likely, therefore, to be born of a woman. They must imagine their god something like their barbaric king, whose mere word were law, disobedience to which, because of his grandeur, would make a heinous crime out of a peccadillo, such as the eating of a prohibited apple. They would believe in certain infernal powers whose business it is to keep a furnace of fire always burning for the punishment of offenders against the majesty of this more powerful king; which would also suggest that this tribe dwelt in a disagreeably hot climate. They would believe that their deity, like their monarch, could only be approached on bended knees, and that he is fond of flattery and glorification. It would be no anomaly in their government that one man should be punished for the crime of another.

"But what should we say—assuming as yet that there is no authority for the creed described—did we learn that the people who built great temples and maintained a vast priesthood in devotion to those beliefs were dwelling in a country and amid general ideas and customs just the reverse of those inferred?—that they inhabited a green and beautiful land, while believing all Nature to be under the blighting curse of God; that when ill they call in a physician, though believing disease and death to be visitations of the divine will; that they will imprison as an impostor one who professes to work miracles, and would not permit the testimony to a miracle of a thousand witnesses to determine the distribution of an estate, while they maintain that one in the form of man did, within historic times, repeatedly raise the dead to life and violate the order of Nature; that they would unseat a judge who should order the death-penalty for the worst theft, while worshipping a God who punishes millions with eternal tortures for an apple eaten thousands of years before they were born; that, with courts of law in which no man can be prosecuted for the sin of another, they believe that all men merit, and many receive, endless agonies at the hands of God for an offence they never committed, and that the only exculpation for any is derived from the tortures of an innocent person in their place; that they would despise an earthly sovereign who should be fond of adulation, and would regard the glorification of such an one to obtain favours as disgusting sycophancy, while they believe that their God can be pacified and coaxed by such appeals to his vanity, and teach every child that the chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him for ever; that, with a language which calls various crimes inhuman, unnatural, unmanly, they proclaim their belief that humanity is desperately wicked, and the natural man a child of the devil; that, while thus believing human nature totally depraved, their politicians seek popular favour by promising to do right instead of wrong, and their tradesmen trust daily to the common integrity; and, lastly, that these people, believing that millions of those around them—including some of their own children, relatives, and friends—are in imminent danger of suffering all the intensified agonies that the wrath of God can inflict, and that vast numbers are now so suffering, or doomed to suffer, do nevertheless go quietly about their business, enjoy themselves in society, and in every way act as if all were going on pleasantly.

"This people, we should say, have somehow got dressed in a religion that does not belong to them,—a borrowed religion, transferred from some desolate land and barbarian age, which, contradicted as it is point for point by its whole environment, is essentially incredible to those professing it,—a creed which could exist amid such conditions only as the fauna or flora of the Tropics can exist in an English park, that is, by the help of an artificial habitat."

When we left the garden, a messenger came to the Interpreter to inform him that a number of pilgrims from the City of Otherworldliness had been seen in the distance, and so he had to hasten home to receive them. Nevertheless, before leaving me, he gave me a number of letters of introduction to friends of his in the city, and a good chart and guide-book, so that with these, and his well-remembered instructions, I have felt that he was with me in spirit on my yet unended pilgrimage.

◆

II.

THE CHURCH AUCTION.

They sold the favour of the Prince to the Vizier, and the Vizier sold the Empire. They sold the law to the Cadi, and the Cadi sold Justice. They sold the altar to the Priest, and the Priest sold Heaven.

VOLNEY.

Tell me, ye pilgrims, who so thoughtful go,
Musing, perhaps, on objects far away,
Come ye from wandering in such distant land
(As by your looks and garb we must infer),
That you our city traverse in her woe,
And mingle with her crowds, yet tears withhold,
Like persons quite unconscious of her state?

DANTE.

THE CHURCH AUCTION.

I WENT to seek an auction-room, where, I had heard, some Cures of Souls were to be sold. The company was thin, and evidently had misgivings about the property. A Jew bid for one of the livings, but the smile that faintly showed itself on the faces present—caused possibly by the oddity of a Catholic duke selling a Christian Cure of Souls to a Jew—caused him to withdraw. The auctioneer could hardly have had much of that kind of property to dispose of, and perhaps he just a little overpassed the bounds of the sentiment around him when he accompanied his graphic picture of a parsonage and its lawns with hopeful suggestions that the aged clergyman, then in occupation, would soon be evicted by the summons to another world. It became, indeed, plain that the auctioneer was a bungler for this once, at least, and he did not succeed in selling, if I remember rightly, one of the livings.

At length the bidders fell away one by one, and the auctioneer departed. I lingered at the door, looking out on some persons who were carrying holly to the market, for Christmas was near, and upon some children, who had already managed to coax a few premature smiles out of Santa-Claus. Turning around I found that a singular company had entered the room, and the auction was about to recommence. But this time it was a new auctioneer who had the matter in hand,—a shadowy individual, with piercing eye and a low voice,—a voice, however, insinuating and cunning enough. It was waxing toward the twilight of a foggy day, and the auctioneer seemed almost a phantom speaking to phantoms. Amid occasional murmurs, and with some pauses, he spoke somewhat after this wise:

"Gentlemen, the auctioneer who has just gone did not half know his business, or else he little comprehended the nature of the property he offered you. I take his place, and would remind you that this is no common lot. These churches have cost a great deal. Their founder had to be nailed on a cross that they might be built. Their walls are cemented with the blood of faithful hearts, the blood of confessors and martyrs. Thousands perished to put them in the state of repair in which I offer them to you. They are consecrated by centuries of sorrow and sacrifice; in them souls have inly burned with the flame of devotion, stricken hearts raised their supplications to One who alone could fathom their needs; souls have brought to those altars their burdens of sin and sorrow, and earnest minds aspired there to know the mysteries of life and death. Their bells have rung in merrily the happy and sad years of wedlock, and again have tolled above the sobs of mourners. Their spires have pointed grief and poverty from earthly struggle to eternal peace. All these have gone to swell the market value of the five Cures of Souls which the light of the blessed Reformation and the grace of the Duke of Norfolk enable me to offer you this day.

"What! does no one bid yet? Did I hear some one muttering about money-changers scourged from the temple, or another call it outrageous that the Cures of Souls should be put up at auction? Gentlemen, we are not children; let us not refer to the childhood of the world for our precedents. We belong to a National Church which represents the apotheosis of decency. A whip of small cords, even for those who make the house of God a den of thieves, were vulgar and fanatical in these days. Above all, let us have no mawkish or hypocritical sentimentalism here. We are Englishmen, who know the pearl of price to be a pound sterling, and we pray that our Queen may live long in health and wealth. As for this church auction, permit me to remind you that it is no novel thing. The Christian Church of old was no sooner built, and the miserable scaffold at its base, on which its founder perished like a slave, raised to shine on its towers as the symbol of honour, than the imperial predecessors of his Grace our Duke put it up at auction. Truth bid for it; Justice, Humanity, Holiness did the same; but Royalty and Superstition joined their purses and outbid the others. They have owned and conducted it to this day. Through them it is that the worshippers in it sit on cushions instead of on the cold hill-side. It is due to them that the successors of wretched fishermen, following one who had not where to lay his head, do now get fine episcopal salaries and palaces.

"Gentlemen, it is a commercial age. Everything is in the market. What will you have? quoth God; pay for it and take it. Observe those saw-grinders at Sheffield; their work demands that each shall live but half of his appointed years, and that the half he does live shall be passed in a dark and dismal Hades, bound, Ixion-like, around the grinding wheel. What wondrous muscles and sinews are there! All the skill of the world could not make the least vein in him, or a drop of the red stream that courses through it. Myriads of ages contributed to give that flash to his eye; and every divine element of the Universe to organise that incomprehensible brain that thinks and feels behind all. What are these fine churches compared with that temple framed by God for his own abode, which without scandal is bought every hour by worshipful Cutlers and Colliers, and other Masters? Who that has a mother, or sister, or daughter need be reminded of the sacred and tender emotions that cluster about the heart of woman? But pass through the Haymarket, or—the distance is but little—hover with the crowd about the doors of the fashionable church where the millionaire buys his young bride, and tell me if womanhood is not in the market.

"Nay, gentlemen, repair to the pulpits themselves; is not every prayer, every sermon, bought and paid for? There is, indeed, an old story that the world once offered all its kingdoms if the founder of Christianity would only modify his ideas of worship, and that he refused; but we must await the results of modern criticism before crediting such preternatural narratives as that. At any rate, we have England to deal with, not ancient Judea, where, it has been truly said, "they didn't know everything." Does any man here believe that the thirteen hundred livings in the hands of the House of Lords, or the livings, representing an annual income of two millions sterling, subject to private patronage, are mainly disposed of to the humblest and devoutest clergymen, without reference to any earthly or political considerations? If so, let him move a return of the number of Liberal clergymen enjoying livings owned by Conservative landlords.

Let him explain why the clergy resist Irish disestablishment in a phalanx almost as solid as that with which the Dissenters, reading the same Bible and worshipping the same Christ, advocate it, if he would show the Church pulpits unpurchasable by any interest. But I need not confine my statement to any one Church. Look abroad through Christendom, and decide whether the scholarship, the ability, the ingenuity, and the eloquence, which still maintain its dogmas, are not retained by fees. Does that learned Oxonian believe that the world was made in six days? Does he believe that on the seventh day God rested, and was refreshed after the fatigue of creation? Does he believe Athanasius, when he says Christ is Almighty God, rather than Jesus, when he says, 'My Father is greater than I;' and does he believe that all who adhere to the latter belief shall without doubt perish everlastingly? Does he believe that God has prepared everlasting fires, that he sends millions into the world knowing that they will eventually burn in the same, and that among those who will suffer that vengeance are all disbelievers of the orthodox creed? Does he believe that Newton, Hume, Channing, Franklin, Schiller, Goethe, Comte, Mill, Carlyle, Emerson, Mazzini, Garibaldi, are all destined to be damned, and that the generation they have been somehow empowered to train is to follow them to perdition? Does he believe that God has assigned as the one Plan of Salvation a scheme which the majority of the best brains constructed by himself find utterly incredible, —a scheme which the chief men of Science find contradicted by every fact of nature, and the jurors of Philosophy find revolting to reason? If the scholarly graduate does not believe this, why does he preach it? Has he not been knocked down at the bid of some grand Abbey, or Chapel, or Cathedral? Has he said, 'Get thee behind me,' to Promotion? What has poor undowered Heresy to offer the young minister? Who shall look for the scholarly divine to utter the talismanic word in his heart, when he knows that at that moment the walls around him must crumble, and he be left to take his chance with the hunted foxes, but without even their certainty as to holes?

"Some foolish people, gentlemen, had fancied there was one wing of the clergy about to withdraw itself from the market. I say foolish, because such an exceptional course could be pursued by no aggregate interest; not because there are not eccentric religionists who are now and then unwilling to exchange their convictions for the whole world. The particular clerical body to which I allude is constituted of those called Ritualists. These men had been showing such a restless and reckless antipathy to our most valuable religious standards that, albeit they had not much sense, some seemed to think they could not be bought up by the Establishment. They stood between their altar and the court of law. On the altar was throned Almighty God, claiming, in their belief, certain definite obeisances; on the bench sat an Englishman authorised to continue to them the advantages and properties of the Establishment on condition that such obeisances should be withheld. As many genuflections as you please, gentlemen, as many altar-lights for God as you desire, only you must go out of our Church with them, as your Master went out of the Synagogue! A plain choice was here to be made between God and man. The result was never doubtful. The Ritualists would like to be on the side of God; they must be on that of the Property.

"Consider these things, I pray you, gentlemen, and confess that it is but a straining at gnats to object to the selling at auction of the five churches, which I now again offer to the highest bidder,—saint or sinner,—without condition, save that no nonconformist shall preach in any one of them, be he the angel Gabriel. Set in them clergymen who shall teach men how to invest successfully in heavenly scrip. Let the children learn, as they did at the Big Tabernacle, that fleeing to Jesus means tea and cake at a distinguished brother's house, and limitless measures of the same hereafter. Let young and old there study the law and the profits. How much was the popularity of Christ's name increased in mediæval Europe after it was stamped on a gold coin, and his leadership (*ducatus*) meant a ducat! And is not the name of God on our own coins? Wherever our race goes, this sanctity of the profitable thing appears—as, across the ocean, in the Almighty Dollar. Other races may be proverbially 'gay,' 'romantic,' 'theoretical:' we are shopkeeping; and in the sacred name of British Trade I offer you these Cures of Souls. Who bids?

" Going—going—GONE!"

III.

ST. ALBAN'S.

Ke Loo asked about serving the spirits of the dead. The Master said, "While you are not able to serve men, how can you serve their spirits?"

Ke Loo added, "I venture to ask about death." He was answered, "While you do not know life, how can you know about death?"

CHINESE CLASSICS.

They say, through patience, chalk
Becomes a ruby stone;
Ah, yes! but by the true heart's blood
The chalk is crimson grown.

HAFIZ (*Emerson's tr.*).

ST. ALBAN'S.

THE reference to the Ritualists in the auctioneer's harangue made me determine to visit St. Alban's Church. I have always had a little niche in my heart for the proto-martyr of Britain. As saints go, he was, perhaps, the most honest we have ever had in this region. He had none of that pious ingenuity which, at Rome, could convert a statue of Jupiter into Peter with his keys. He said plainly to the barbarians, "These deities to whom you offer sacrifices are not deities, but devils; and he that offers prayers or sacrifices to them, so far from securing the objects of his desire, will have everlasting tortures in hell for his reward." The deities thus blasphemed were not accustomed to postpone their retaliations to a future world, as poor Alban soon had reason to know. The clergyman and worshippers at the London church named after him were, about the time of my going there, giving some indications that they would prove equally uncompromising with

Alban toward their opponents. That, at least, would be a sign of life, and therefore hopeful.

I went early enough to see them lighting their candles, and could not help thinking of the foolish virgins trimming their lamps. Give us, O buried Ages, of your oil, for our lamps of the Present have gone out! Yet there was a singular archæological interest about the scene. The legend of the Romans and Huns, above whose slain hosts two spectral armies arose to continue the battle in the air, seemed realised in the ritualistic controversy. These vestments and candles were the ghosts of ancient banners and war-fires, once the insignia of real religions. Would that one could add just enough to the forehead of yonder strong-headed priest to enable him to trace to their sources the candles on his altar!—gathered there, as he might be amazed to find, from the torches of Isis, Demeter, Ceres, from the Shechinah of Israel, from the altars of Sun-worship, from the Baal-fires, or Bel-fires, and Bon-fires, which still light up certain dark corners of Europe where paganism managed to linger longer than elsewhere: for the pagans (*pagani*, rustics; or heathen, dwellers on the heath) hold on to old religions which have been trampled out in the cities.

A poet looked while the sun shone upon a sod, and a flower answered. A poem flowered in his mind at the same moment. It was the face of a goddess smiling from the earth in those tinted petals, who should be named Demeter. By Zeus, the Sky, she has conceived, and the floral offspring he will name Persephone. But now Winter comes—Pluto, the god of Hades, he shall be called—and snatches the flower away. Demeter, mourning her lost child, searches through the earth, attended by sunbeams for torches, and finds Persephone at last (a seed) in the Underworld. The sunbeams assure the partial victory of Demeter: they lead the flower to upper light and air again; but on condition that she shall pass one-third of the year (winter) with Pluto. This was the simple allegory dramatised in the Mysteries of Eleusis, revived in Rome in the myth of Ceres and Proserpine. It fell upon the stony ground of literalism in unimaginative Rome, and the common people worship Ceres as the supreme power over the fruitfulness of land and cattle, and even of mothers. The temple raised to conciliate her in time of famine at Rome becomes the temple of the farming and labouring classes: hence, presently, of political importance. In it the decrees of the Senate must be inspected by the tribunes of the people. Allied thus with the Democracy which is to sway Europe, Ceres gained a kind of immortality. Europa herself, after whom the continent was named, was probably a modification of the same goddess; and we call our grains *cereals* after Ceres. It is not wonderful that the despised Christians were glad to ally themselves with this religion of the people, nor that the two should be jumbled in the brain of Constantine,—who was wont to consult pagan oracles as to how he should propagate Christianity, —and should through him pass together to mould Western Christianity.

Thus it happens that, as Constantine had "Soli Invicto" on his coins, while the cross was on his banners, the priest here in St. Alban's, bowing before a cross, says, "Light of lights." From Eleusis, not from the Bible, he recites, "He descended into hell." Then he goes on with his brief discourse to declare his altar a real altar, with God actually and supernaturally present upon it. This is the immortality which Ceres has obtained. The story should have been told of her, rather than of Tithonos, that the granted petition for immortality was followed by such decrepitude that the recipient was glad to be transformed to a grasshopper. To this miserable form has the beautiful myth of Egypt, Greece, and Rome shrunk, as observable at St. Alban's.

Nevertheless, there was a certain fervour about the sermon that set me asking whether Ritualism itself may not be, in a certain way, a Proserpine lost in Hades, a seed for which sunbeams are searching? Hides there not a germ of life in this doctrine of the "real presence," little suspected by this devout somnambulist? At least he does not hold that God wrought in the earth eighteen centuries ago as he no longer does, or that his wonders were limited to Palestine. It is sad to see galaxies shrunken to St. Alban's candles, and Nature under a paten, and the long line of Seers and Prophets ending in this *poupée* in painted clothes. It is not delightful to witness a marionnette performance of the sacred drama of the Universe. Yet at each moment, and with each phrase, the Ritualist was groping with bandaged eyes near the holiest truths. As one sees in caverns quaint repetitions of the forms of Nature, even to star-chambers or mimic firmaments, so does one find in the underground foliations of St. Alban's a mystical imitation of the upper-world growths of the human heart, and even of the vault of Reason. May we not hope that, as the law has come in to spoil these miserable vestments and dwarfed symbols, the Ritualists may be driven to some point where a gleam of the Day may reveal to them that it is a cellar they have mistaken for a saloon? Indignant, oppressed, their dry breasts heated once more with the feeling that they are no longer free,—still better, their minds forced once again to do duty in considering their position in England, and their consciences roused to question whether every hour they are not accepting the thirty pieces of the Establishment for the betrayal of their Lord,—there may yet come a time when some strong human spirit shall enter here with wand of light, to touch this altar till it expand again to the green earth, and transform these candles into lamps of Science, Liberty, Art,—into the beams which search all sods where thoughts are repressed, and into constellations above, chanting to holier fires within that Real Presence which fills and thrills the Universe.

IV.

AN OLD SHRINE.

Dushmanta. Where is the holy retreat of Máricha?

Mátali. A little beyond that grove, where you see a pious Yógì, motionless as a pollard, holding his thick bushy hair, and fixing his eyes on the solar orb. Mark; his body is half covered with a white ant's edifice made of raised clay; the skin of a snake supplies the place of his sacerdotal thread, and part of it girds his loins; a number of knotty plants encircle and wound his neck; and surrounding birds' nests almost conceal his shoulders.

Dushmanta. I see with equal amazement both the pious and their awful retreat. It becomes, indeed, pure spirits to feed on balmy air in a forest blooming with trees of life.

SACONTALA.

AN OLD SHRINE.

THE sun shone fair on old Canterbury on the day when the new Archbishop was to be consecrated; and on that morning I made my way to the little church of St. Martin, on the hill near the city. Thence I gazed over the ruin of the old Christian church, which was built on the preceding ruin of an ancient British temple, until my eye was fixed on the stately Cathedral. Time gradually drew its perspective about those towers, and they stood as Hercules' Pillars at the end of a voyage of twelve centuries. But not even time can measure the vast distance between little St. Martin's here and the Cathedral there. Through what ages of sunshine and frost, by what waterings with tears and blood, did this small brown seed which Ethelbert permitted to be planted in his kingdom expand to that great flower!

On this hill it was that Augustin the monk stood, meditating on the fate of the uncompromising Alban, his predecessor,—a fate for which he had no taste whatever. As he gazed on the old capital of the nation he had been sent to convert, a spirit hovered near him, and said, "All these will I give thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me!" Augustin cried, "Get thee beh— But stay; who art thou?" "I am the chief deity worshipped by this people. Make me thy enemy, and thou shalt share the fate of Alban; make me thy friend, and instead of this little hut, where the king permits thee to worship thy saints, thou shalt have over there a palace, and a gorgeous Cathedral, with a throne from which thou and thy successors shall rule England." "Let us compromise," replied Augustin. "I cannot exactly and by name worship thee and thy fellow-deities, but I will respect thy insignia and thy sacred days. My churches shall be twined with holly; they shall be built beside thy sacred wells, and near the holy oaks. Thy miracles and those of our saints will blend very naturally. In short, if thou and thy gods will only consent to be christened into new names, the change need be only so much as can be effected by a handful of water." The contract was signed, and Augustin had his throne and his Cathedral. Insignificant St. Martin's will not do for a Christ allied to Royalty.

Since then the glacial centuries have moved on, each scratching a sign of its march on some stone of the building yonder.

The most notable spot in the Cathedral, to my mind, was one of which no one has been able to give any account. Canterbury was the place of splendid shrines, and religious history is full of the accounts of pilgrimages to them from all parts of the world. Of these, the most distinguished was that of St. Thomas à Becket, a mass of gold and gems. The great historic shrines have all their original positions well known, and in front of some of them are the marks of pilgrims' knees. But about none of these great shrines are such evidences of popular devotion as about the mysterious spot on one side, of which there is no history or trace except the pavement which pilgrims' knees have worn into hollows. Who was this Unknown God? Had it been found necessary to invest a Christian Saint with the sanctity of some image of the native religion? Had Ethelbert's Queen, now St. Bertha, been costumed as a Madonna, because she bore the holiest name of the Saxon Mythology?

Much applause has been awarded Gregory and Augustin for their method of borrowing for their Church the glories of paganism. It is claimed to be highly philosophical to recognise the unities underlying various religions. But there is a difference between Philosophy and Jesuitism. Alban honestly saying—what Augustin believes as well—that the heathen deities are devils, is a nobler figure than the Jesuit in America commending Jesus to the savages as a chief who scalped one thousand of his enemies in a single day.

If there were anything needed to make Augustin uglier in the matter, it is that he hardly fulfilled the conditions under which he secured the union of Church and State. Once on his throne, he seems to have overruled the popular worship as vigorously as he could, short of incurring any peril for himself like that which overtook Alban. Canterbury Cathedral, as established by him, must be looked upon as the first Conservatory built to secure for Christianity a habitat in the North, where no unimported element was friendly to it. Those who occupied his throne after he was dead did not regard it as necessary to be bound by his shrewd contract with the existing deities. Some bits of the famous old windows and carvings still remain to show with what beauty the Church saints looked down upon the people; but in the crypt—copied, perhaps, from the walls of older periods—the grinning and deformed figures are still to be seen, each, probably, the representative to the newer pagan generation of some god of their forefathers. And this contrast between the saintly faces and the horrible bestialities physiognomically represents the difference between the condition of their respective adherents. Thenceforth, for the believer all that is good, for the heretic all that is bad. The land is divided among those who conform most aggressively, and they who conform not shall wear the bronze collars of the others. The succeeding generations can be more easily dealt with; for the priestly horror of any education but that which trains the neck for the priestly yoke was already in full vigour, and the very cradle-sides were made to teach that everlasting tortures by fire awaited all who should doubt or deny; these lessons being also continually impressed by a practical anticipation of such fires for notorious heretics. On the other hand, for the implicit belief, Heaven,—its radiance reflected in the palaces and cathedrals it was competent to bestow in advance upon favourites. Poor Odin and Thor, now sadly out at elbows, were fairly put to shame. For that matter, they might, indeed, have claimed brotherhood with him in whose name they were exterminated; but it was by no means a peasant befriending his fellow-peasants, at the cost of crucifixion, who was talked of in England in those days, but a triumphant Prince, whose celestial glory and power over quick and dead gleamed upon the earth in the pomp of kings and in the swords and splendours of Crusaders, Templars, Hospitallers, and what not, who bore his banner through the world.

Such was Conservatory Number One. It was strongly built. The shrine, now nameless, which had proved such a powerful rival to those of imported saints, was removed. But a day came when the wind and weather beat in upon those of à Becket, of Dunstan, and the rest, and they too mouldered away. There is hardly any roof lower than the blue dome through which the elements will not find their way. An honest monk spake in Germany, and the golden shrines of Canterbury turned to ashes. The honest monk shuddered at what he had done, and was presently ready to join those who would rebuild the Conservatory anew; but his mistake was in thinking it was his work. He merely summed up and named the composite work of a thousand years, in which German thought and Saxon honesty had honeycombed quite silently the Augustinian fabric. All the kings and priests, their horses and men, could not undo the work that had been done.

Things must undergo many repairs in order to last, and with every repair something must perish. After looking at the grotesque images carved on capitals in the crypt, and concluding that their originals were Christian caricatures of pagan deities, I passed a little way on, and saw much refuse, made by the workmen then engaged in repairing the building. The heaps presented an odd jumble. At one spot there were old pulpits, and old seats, and benches for kneeling. Who had spoken from the pulpits, and who had knelt? Had one set of dogmas been uttered and heard, or had each successive pulpit known some "wing,"—in its time high, hard, or broad? One might suppose the figures of the pillars to be grinning their delight on the heaps of rubbish on another side. Many poor saints, in whose interest they had been caricatured, were here piled in fragments, awaiting transfer to some dust-hole. The sandalled feet of one propped the nose and eyes of another; armless hands completed footless legs; and mitres, sceptres, cowls, crowns, swords had tumbled into a common confusion. Dust to dust! They were the pillars of the first Conservatory, the decorations of the second. What fragments a century of revolutions had spared, time had at length pulverised, and they must go to rest upon the dust of the gods they superseded, slowly forming the rock on which the next higher temple shall be built.

For there was a Conservatory Number Two to be built for the exotic, which the toil of centuries had not been able to acclimatise. The materials of the old one could plainly not be used, save, as we have seen, for ornamental purposes,—as the castellated turrets, which once meant utility, still decorate mansions raised in an age of peace, or we follow as sports the serious occupations of savage life. The old weapons of the Church have been broken. Earthly government has found it necessary to mitigate some of the rigours of divine law. Hell-fires can no more be anticipated at Smithfield, nor the earthly heaven be secured to believers so absolutely as before. Nevertheless, there remains the power to urge all the more the terrors and rewards of the future, and—for these must grow weak—Society may still wield its ostracisms and distribute its advantages for the coercion of opinion. The Thirty-nine Articles shall mean many things, but one thing definitely shall they mean: thirty-nine pieces of money to him who shall betray Reason for them. To them shall be given the Keys of Knowledge, and only he shall enter the University who will lay down his independence at the threshold. Every heretic shall see the difference between his own and his orthodox neighbour's coffers. As for the clever young scholars, if they become restless under the task of believing the incredible, there shall be provided the chloroform of promotion and luxury, under which surgeries can be easily performed on the mind. Has any young theologian a tendency to doubt, or to write radical books? Make him a Head Master, a Canon, a Dean, a Professor, or a Bishop.

Thus it came to pass that, on the fourth day of February, 1869, a great crowd of cultivated people sat together in Canterbury Cathedral—Conservatory Number Two of the Incredible Creed—to witness the consecration of a plain old Scotch gentleman to the task of presiding over the work of maintaining in Great Britain the worship of a dead Jew.

Before the white Gothic throne—the ancient one from which Augustin ruled within sight—I sat waiting. A buzz of gay conversation filled the building. Each clergyman who entered was discussed; the poor clergymen in seedy coats, their wives in old-fashioned bonnets, were greeted with titters. Bonnets, in proportion to their antiquity, retain their ancient power to render their wearers invisible to many. Some of these country faces were fresh as roses climbing on cottage-doors; about others hovered the faces of children whose love they had gained; now and then some appeared on which were reflected the sad smiles of invalids over whom they had bent. There were signs that these and their husbands—they of the seedy coats—came from regions where the ministry of Christ still retains a meaning. These had not come for a pic-nic, like those whose mirth they excited.

Gradually all became still; the solemnity of the occasion wrought its effect, and we returned to our thoughts. An old window, refashioned out of the fragments of some older one, attracted my attention. It may have been that which is the last memorial of à Becket in the Cathedral. If so, he is in a very chaotic condition. A horse's head here, a human leg there, an old mitre linked on to a nose and chin, make a somewhat grotesque impression. While I was endeavouring to piece together St. Thomas again, the time arrived when the clergy should piece together all that remained of the broken materials that once went to the making of a real Archbishop of Canterbury.

An old Gregorian chant is wafted to us from far away outside. A breathless stillness falls upon the multitude. The distant strain is very sweet; it may have been the very chant which Augustin and his monks sang as they marched from the seashore to Canterbury. At any rate, it came out of the sacred heart of a Past when faith was real; it was such music that built the walls of cathedrals, and its true refrain is in that music before which their walls are falling.

The chanters now enter the building, where the organ takes up their strain, and the slow beat of the footsteps of the procession keeps time,—as it were, personating the march of centuries. The ecclesiastics enter, and among them the slightly bent but still stately old man—the centre now of all eyes—who is painfully going through his part. Two young men in full evening dress carry his train, which stretches some yards behind him. Could I be mistaken in thinking there was a shade of humiliation on his face?

There was something sadly unreal about the whole affair; but where can the eye alight on anything in the religious world more real?

When the ceremony was over, I went back to St. Martin's. The two most eminent Deans that

Canterbury ever knew were there. They stood together, gazing silently on the window stained with a picture of St. Martin in the act of cutting his cloak in two to give half of it to the naked beggar crouching near his horse's head.

While we were all sauntering about the diminutive building, a voice arrested our attention. A strange-looking man, with limp white cravat and threadbare coat, had got up into the little pulpit. His white locks fell about a face wrinkled with care, down upon his shoulders. His glittering eye held us as that of the Ancient Mariner did the Wedding Guest. Thus he spake:

"St. Martin's Church faces Canterbury Cathedral. The lowliness of the one and the grandeur of the other do not alone mark different eras of the English Church; they mark two totally distinct religions. The one means the Saint who sacrifices his raiment for the needy; the other means a Saint who sacrifices the needy to his raiment. What are our grand cathedrals, with their great revenues, but the rich gold-embroidered cloaks of a Jewish peasant, whose position has in England become princely?

"I am a poor country clergyman, with a large family, and one hundred and fifty pounds a year. For thirty years I have bent shivering, like the beggar on the window there, near the door of a magnificent Cathedral. Before the altar of that

Cathedral a Bishop—who has been unable to do any work for ten years—moulders away, awaiting the day when he shall be carved there in stone, when he will do as much good as he does now. Fifty people get their living out of the revenues of that Cathedral. They keep up a daily service for about twenty-five daily listeners. These attendants are from wealthy families in the neighbourhood, who have nothing else to do. The common people never go there. What can I see in that Cathedral but a great pile of loam in the centre of a barren field? What could I not do for my own culture, for my own ability to serve, for the poor and ignorant around me, if the wealth of this useless heap were distributed for the religious advantage of the people? As it is, what do I find under the shadow of those majestic towers? I will not speak of the daily anxiety, and the effort to make both ends meet; nor of a certain happy girl who has faded into the pale and careworn mother who toils and suffers at my side. But there is the need of servility to the wealthy, who think themselves St. Martins if they throw us an occasional shilling; there is the parasite of ignorance creeping over my children's minds; there is the subtle scepticism and despair deposited by each day in my own.

"Yet a compensation has come, though late. I have been trained by sorrow to know that the religion of the Church is not the religion of him who, to those who cried, 'Lord, Lord!'—but left the naked unclothed and the hungry to starve,—replied, 'I never knew you!' I see the saintliness of Martin well enough; and I know that, were he now living and powerful, the sword which there passes through his velvet cloak would pass through and through every Cathedral and every big ecclesiastical salary in England, and the humanity of to-day would receive that which was bequeathed to it by the humanity of the past. I discern, with eyes sharpened by pain, that the faith of the past built cathedrals and splendid shrines because they believed them to be gateways of eternal salvation, and that they who now enjoy them do so without acknowledging the faith that built them. Is yonder great endowment to be administered in the letter or in the spirit? If in the letter, it belongs to the Roman Catholics; if in the spirit, it should be applied to those aims and ideas which constitute the real faith of the English people. The bequest of the faith of one age cannot belong to that faith which another age has abjured. Do the English people believe in eternal hell-fire, in devils, in the potency of saints, without which no cathedral was ever yet built? Do pilgrims swarm along the Old Kent Road as in Chaucer's day? Amid the conflict of sects, the surgings of scepticism, the only shores of belief, as solid as that on which were built and endowed our cathedrals, are popular education, freedom of thought, political liberty, and the rescue of the masses from pauperism, disease, and vice. Therefore, though to me there is left only a weak arm and a feeble voice, the last effort of both shall be made here and now. To the Church I bid an eternal adieu. And it is given me to prophesy the end for which I cannot work—that a Spirit is advancing, which shall send those idle Cathedrals to follow their master in doing good; which shall scatter the Archbishops' revenues and thrones and vestments, as King Henry scattered the jewels and gold of à Becket's shrine; and of all the grand establishments which the Universe has disestablished, not one stone shall be left upon another. The twelve centuries which to-day looked down from the towers of Canterbury, and saw the proud array of Bishops and Clergy, who leave the great causes and forget the heavy wrongs of the present to fulminate against stiff-necked Jews and defunct Pilates, shall be followed by an Age which shall look down from a loftier height upon Truth's golden harvests, waving over the spots whereon they stand. All this I see, O my brothers, as this day I turn from the Church, with its splendid insignia, and come hither to begin anew the path of my ministry where the Church began—with the Saint dividing his cloak with the beggar."

When the old clergyman had ceased, he tottered and nearly fell. The two Deans, who had been gazing on the stained windows, sprang forward and bore him to their own carriage, in which he was driven away.

Sometimes I have thought that this scene, and the strange sermon, and the aged seer himself, must all have been a dream; but, again, certain burdens of warning that have since issued from Canterbury and Westminster suggest that others besides myself must have been impressed on that occasion.

* * *

V.

ISENGRIMM.

"And now look at me," the old ruin said; "centuries have rolled away, the young conqueror is decrepit now; dying, as the old faith died, in the scenes where that faith first died, and lingering where it lingered. The same sad sweet scene is acting over again. . . . The village church is outliving me for a few more generations; there still ring, Sunday after Sunday, its old reverend bells, and there come still the simple peasants in their simple dresses. . . . Yet is not that, too, all passing away? . . . The fairies dance no more around the charmed forest ring. . . . The creed still seems to stand, but the creed is dead in the thoughts of mankind."

J. A. Froude.

Tiger! Tiger! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

Did He who made the lamb make thee?

William Blake.

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ISENGRIMM.

In a cowled wolf, carved in the choir of an old church, I recognised the features of Isengrimm.

Isengrimm is the suggestive name given by the Norse fable to the wolf in human shape whom the missionaries made into a monk. When, however, they would have him say Paternosters, all they could get was a pious prayer for *lamb, lamb;* and "his thoughts were ever to the woodward."

How Isengrimm was converted, and made monk, one may easily find in the Heimskringla and other chronicles of those ages. Olaf entering peaceful villages, and offering their inhabitants the alternatives of being burnt or baptised; Charlemagne with his motto, "Christianity or death;" Augustin, with Ethelbert to back him, ready to slaughter twelve hundred Welsh monks who, accepting Christ, were not so certain about the Pope,—such were the preachers, attended by divine prodigies, who persuaded Isengrimm to be a monk. Did he hesitate?—a pan of live coals is placed beneath his belly, and he is asked, "Wilt thou now believe in Christ?" Does he mutter a prayer to the elements that have cradled his strength?—an adder is set to crawl down his throat. Pondering these arguments, Isengrimm at length consents to baptism, and to say Christian grace henceforth over his lamb. But, meanwhile, what are Olaf, Charlemagne, Ethelbert, and the rest, but baptised Isengrimms?

Fine enough are the reports that reach Rome. Miracles are wrought, the heathen converted, and each missionary must have his cathedral. How numerous are the converts in the Sandwich Islands when the anniversary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Lands is about to take place, and the collections to be made! How wonderful have been the cures in the Hospitals for incurable maladies when subscription-time arrives! There was a vast deal of human nature in man even twelve or fifteen hundred years ago. The Pope congratulates himself that the Angles are now Angels, and his priests in the North have their reward.

But how to deal with Isengrimm, who, from beneath his cowl, begins lustily to demand his lamb again, and to yearn for the woods where his old altars stand? Neither torture nor baptism has, it seems, gone beyond the skin of him; nay, he even prowls dangerously around the cathedral doors, and snaps up an Alban now and then. The fact is, he must have his lamb and his woods. So Isengrimm calls Odin Christ, and continues to worship him; he goes to church because it is built over his long-time holy well, and is adorned with his holy oak; and he does not relish his day of sacrifice less because, provided he will call it Christmas, the meat shall be roasted instead of consumed, and be enjoyed by himself instead of by the gods. All this is certainly better than being burnt himself, and is cheaply purchased by submission to a little holy water,—itself not impossibly, say the missionaries, derived from Mimir's Well.

Isengrimm's nature is, in fact, part of this universe, and it is not easy to cheat the laws that play through him. We see the pebble falling to the earth; we do not see the earth moving in due proportion to meet the pebble. Yet move it does; and though ancient history reports only how the religion of the North was lost in Christianity, the history that is yet to be written will show that it conquered only to be conquered. "She that liveth in luxury is dead while she liveth." The Church filled the North with monasteries, universities, cathedrals; but the only effective voices obtained from them in the end have been those of the descendants of Isengrimm,—the voices of Luther and Knox, of Goethe and Grimm, of Bauer and Strauss. These report how his thoughts are still ever to the woodward;

and though there his old deities linger only as shrunken into gnomes and pixies, or the ghastly procession of the Wild Huntsman, or have perished altogether, yet they pass away only to rise again under the wand of Science, which is now Isengrimm's religion. In the fair laws of that Nature which he has never ceased in his heart to adore, Odin and Thor, Baldur and Freyja, shine again from their niches, and Bertha returns to befriend mankind.

Christianity fulfilled in the North the prophecy of the Edda:—

Surtur from the South wends
With seething fire;
The falchion of the mighty one,
A sun-light flameth.
Mountains together dash,
Giants headlong rush,
Men tread the paths to Hell,
And Heaven in twain is rent.

But Science shall no less surely fulfil the rest of the prophecy; for, amid Surtur's conflagration,

Lif and Lifthrasir
Shall keep themselves hid
In Hodmimir's forest;
The dew of the dawn
Shall serve them for food,
And from them spring the races.

Who can mistake the tone of the authentic voices of Anglo-Saxon civilisation to the Theology which still stands declaring that all who do not accept it shall without doubt perish everlastingly?

"Depart!" cries the human Conscience. "Your creed refers to benighted eras when men believed that evil and sin were the mere whims of a Supreme Being, like the most frivolous among themselves; one whose mere word could make the eating of an apple a deadlier sin than murder: it belongs not to a day when the highest voice in every soul declares the eternal laws, which God himself dare not violate."

"Depart!" cries Common Sense. "Your miracles and legends belong to an age when men could not see a lunatic without fancying a devil was in him, or a meteor without believing it the arrow of a god: it has no part or lot in a generation to which sciences are revealing the laws of cause and effect."

"Depart!" cry the Senses. "Your story of a blighted and ruined world may do for Syrian deserts, or for monks and nuns who have buried themselves in unillumined cloisters; but on the green slopes of Western Europe, and amid its cheerful populations, every flower, every singing bird, proves it a prodigy of falsehood; and every happy home, with its loving mother and bright-eyed child, every honest man, is a contradiction to your wild superstition of the fall and the depravity of human nature."

"Depart!" cries the Democracy of the West. "Your despotic deity, with his hell for all who do not glorify him enough, and sugar-plum heaven for his flatterers, is an idol copied from some barbaric king among his courtiers, with his racks and his patronages beside him: it has no place in nations where rulers are as much subject to the laws as the people, for whom, and not for princes, laws are established; and where the poorest cannot be punished but under codes that all must make and all obey."

"Depart!" cries the aspiring Religious Sentiment. "To the earnest inquiry of liberated hearts for truth, you have been proved the false reply; now you stand in the light: there stationed across the path, mocking all knowledge, browbeating every brave seeker for truth, frightening the young with your bogies, flattening the heads of babes to make their brains into your own image and likeness, you are the enemies of all the great tendencies and ideals of this age, which, but for you, could even now perhaps attain the true faith and build the genuine shrine for which the Spirit of Man weeps and watches."

Thus, in chorus, rise all noble voices. As the fires of Smithfield have made way for the Meat Market, so, after them, have the flames of God's eternal Smithfield faded out of the marts and daily life of the people. There is not a man or woman in London whose practice accords with a belief in the promises and threats of the Christian creed.

How would it affect that man at his work, or in the theatre, if he believed that his child at home were in remote danger of being burnt for even five minutes? The man who should offer his cheek to the smiter, his cloak to the robber,—who should not resist evil, but let scoundrelism have its way,—or the man who should take no thought for the morrow,—is not the kind of man anyone wishes his son to be. Who is it that sells all he has and gives to the poor? Well enough, all this, for those who look for the swift destruction of the world, and are laying up treasures for a kingdom coming out of the sky; but not for sane men, who eat the earth and find it sweet, and know that it will survive, as it has in the past, the advent and departure of many celestial kingdoms. England is the Cemetery of Religions: Druidism, Odinism, Romanism, came from afar to find their graves here; and behold the feet of them which have buried those religions are at the door, and shall carry out also that which remains to frighten fools and make hypocrites of the able, moulding no heart to simplicity and grandeur.

* * *

VI

ZAÜBERPFEIFE.

By this time, like one who had set out on his way by night, and travailed through a Region of smooth or idle Dreams, our History now arrives on the Confines, where daylight and truth meet us with a clear dawn, representing to our view, though at far distance, true colours and shapes.

MILTON.

Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds:
At which the universal host up sent
A shout that tore hell's concave, and beyond
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.

MILTON.

ZAÜBERPFEIFE.

DURING the famous trial of Saurin *v.* Star and Kennedy, I went to watch the case in the interest of a silent and unrecognised party thereto. The incident of most interest to my client was this: on the production of a scapular in court, the Lord Chief Justice requested that it might be handed up for his inspection, confessing that he "did not know what a scapular was." Has it come to this?

Running through the European mythology one finds, in many variations, the legend of the magic music to whose measure all must keep step. From the falling of the walls of Jericho before the ram's horn of Joshua, or the rising of those of Thebes to the lyre of Orpheus, the old story passes to the magic horn with which Roland, at Roncesvalles, called his warriors from afar, or the flute by which, as he reappeared in fairy romance, he freed his lovely May-bird from the wicked enchantress. Adopted by Christianity in Germany, we find the magic pipe making the Jew dance among thorns until his wickedness is punished. And in England the same protean pipe is discovered sounding one of the first notes of Protestantism. "A mery Geste of the Frere and the Boye," first "emprynted at London in Flete-streete, at the sygne of the Sonne, by Wynkin de Worde," relates how the boy received, as one of three gifts, a pipe of magic power:

All that may the pipe here
Shall not themselfe stere,
But laugh and lepe about.

This original "Tom, Tom, the piper's son," did not confine his cunning instrument to making cows and milkmaids dance. He so wrought upon a Friar that he capered until he lost

His cope and scapelary
And all his other wede.

Was this profane lad but Henry the Eighth in disguise? Was his pipe the bugle of Cromwell? Whatever it may have been in history that made the English priest dance out of his cope and scapulary, we know what to-day represents the magic pipe, to whose sound all must move, and even mountains open, as they did before the Pied Piper of Hamelin. It is the steam-whistle. This it is to whose shrill remorseless note the age goes burrowing, tunnelling, bridging oceans, soaring over Alps and Rocky my friend from Calcutta. He r with symbols covering temple the procession started to follow rough the streets, he needed not oriental imagination to see how of thickness in the veil was re- a procession of Brahmins follow- rgha with hymns; or of Moham- ith funereal march the image of et's grandson, slain by the man .

wretched streets we passed. By the ragged, the diseased, the of the street, caricaturing the reaming; scoffing men and boys. about "Jesu" were sung: over gyman, in his quaint skull-cap , told the story of the ancient me did Calvary excite so much ailing of a wounded child near ions." The preacher preached priests sang with hollow voices, this Way of the Cross seemed at ve one woman who, in a moment ed a large bowl at the procession, ction on "the Puseyites." The y sharply the hand that now nt; but the priest claimed the malediction, and said at the next the wild echoes thou hast set flying, the very dust marches into shapes of beauty. Above the bass of Commerce is the clear tenor of Fraternity. Lo, there is a music on the air, as of the breaking of millions of chains! From Italy, Russia, America, Spain, the echoes return in the happy voices of liberated hearts and homes. The dragons crawl away to their caverns. This one generation, with its vulgar steam-whistle, has witnessed the vanishing of more shadows from the earth, has seen more men and women disenthralled, more rays of intellectual light shed abroad upon mankind, than any ten generations which have preceded it; and, ere it ceases, that shrill signal shall swell to the trump of the Last Judgment, bringing to the bar of Humanity every creed or institution of the earth.

* * *

VII.

CONTRIVANCES.

The Supreme Intelligible is to be apprehended with the flower of the Intellect.

By devoting the illumined Intellect to piety you shall preserve the changing forms of piety.

ZOROASTER.

Between us be truth!
Woe,
Oh, woe upon the lie! It frees not the breast
Like the true-spoken word; it comforts not, but tortures
Him who devised it, and returns,
An arrow once let fly, God-repelled, back
On the bosom of the archer!

GOETHE'S *Iphigenia*.

CONTRIVANCES.

It is the wail of the Nineteenth Century that one hears in Browning's *Paracelsus;* most of all in that

> Sad rhyme of the men who proudly clung
> To their first fault, and withered in their pride.

Over the sea the galleys bore the pilgrims seeking the promised island where they should build their shrines in peace. At last they are cast upon a rock. They bring forth their statues, and build their shrines, and sit together singing that their task is done; when, lo! the gentle islanders from the spot they were really seeking come in happy throngs to tell them that their isles, with olive-groves and temple-gates, are waiting for them and their shrines. The pilgrims have awaked from their dream too late. They see now how desolate is the rock which has received their precious freight, but they say,—

> Depart!
> Our gifts, once given, must here abide.
> Our work is done; we have no heart
> To mar our work.

Cast, after its weary voyage over dark seas of misgiving and doubt, on this desolate shore of dogma, the human heart, in its pressing need of worship, invested the bareness with its own illusions, and raised thereon its holiest shrines. With the barren myths and dogmas—lava-streams once, now cooled to rock—sacred ideals and precious humanities have become associated. Were it not so, not all the bribes could avail to keep Christianity here one day longer. To that old human heart, which it holds accursed, it is indebted for what vitality it still possesses, through the illusions softening its hard outlines.

My next visit was made to a small island in the great sea of London, where were gathered a little company of those who were trying to make the best of the "first fault." Their lucid statues shone upon the bare walls of a dismal room. It was Christmas-eve. On the wall was that emblem so dear to radicalism—the cross—made of evergreen, and beneath it the legend: "Behold, I create all things new." I pretty soon found that it was a Society of Scholars established for the Contrivance of Means to hold on to the Symbols of Christianity. Chief among them was the noble brow and luminous eye of the great preacher of London (not your popular divine, orthodox reader, but an unpopular divine, who preaches to a few scores of people only!), who, in his conversation, dwelt much on the importance that Theists should not consent to be divorced from the great religious heart and history of Christendom, but that the continuity of our religious development should be preserved.

Thereon a guest ventured to comment somewhat after this wise:

It were well enough to devote our energies to the preservation of the continuity of its religious development to the race, were it in danger; but the reality of such continuity can no more be broken than our political or physical continuity.

We do not call our diamonds coal, nor our opals flint, though such they essentially are. Why should our modern ideas be called Christian, admitting they are simple crystallisations out of that substance, and not rather combinations of many religions? So far as the fact itself is concerned, it is no more a just statement to say that our pure Theism is Christian because it was, perhaps, necessarily preceded by a Christian training, than to say that the American President is a King because his office was modified from the English throne.

When words cease to be physiognomical, they become masks. Many persons of religious and political insight invest their ideas and schemes with a Christian phraseology because of the *prestige* which that phraseology has with the people whom they desire to influence. But *prestige* is simply

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idea, affecting interests of an eternal nature, is advanced, a cross in one age, a faggot in another, and anathemas always, are the first natural replies to it. The minds tending to abstract modes of thought are rare enough to warrant the concentration of their force upon the truth they see. For one pushing in the new direction, there are sure to be ten thousand pulling the other; and, were the mere formal continuity insisted upon of even real value, it is never in danger from insufficient advocacy.

But the conservatism which alone is healthy is that which chiefly works to preserve the essential by means of the modifications necessary to adjust it to inevitable changes of social and moral conditions. No animal, it is shown, has any trait which is not now, or has not at some period been, of vital importance to it. Similarly we may conclude that every religious form or rite was once real, every watchword of conservatism was once the watchword of radicalism, all things old were once new. The Litany, idly repeated by happy-hearted youth, who yesterday were at croquet and cricket, was the outburst of stricken hearts amid convulsions of nature, war, plague, and famine: uttered now, it is the mummy of a revival, set up where a real one is impossible. The first silent Quaker meeting was accidental; the emotion of that hour is vainly sought for by the formal imitations of its silence. And so the rantings, shoutings, love-feasts, communions, baptisms, are attempts to recover the ecstasies of shining moments by copying the superficial incidents that attended them,—attempts as absurd as the famous fidelity with which the Chinese manufacturers imitated the tea-set they were required to replace, even to the extent of preserving all the cracks and flaws of the originals. By this fatal following of the letter, the prophets of the past are made to conspire against their own visions in the present. The dogma of a Trinity was, in its origin, the petrifaction of elements devised by bold freethinkers in their advance from polytheism to monotheism: as held over the world now, it is Plato and Philo forced to impose a fetter upon their own brother-spirits who to-day would fulfil their aims. Religious history thus presents a series of adaptations, each in its day an innovation, but for which the development of the moral sentiment would have been arrested. That which calls itself conservatism adheres to forms that must become fossil, whereas any true conservatism must rescue the essence by transferring it to forms which have their life yet to live. Mere impenetrability is not conservatism.

In an old town I read on an ancient tablet the eulogium upon a public-spirited citizen who had built in the centre of it a substantial market-house; and near it was another in commemoration of a citizen who had removed the same when, in the course of the town's growth, it had become an obstacle,—replacing it with a handsome square. Ah, could the citizens only have looked with as much common sense on the mouldy church, with its mouldier creed, standing near!

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VIII.

CHRISTIAN IDEALISM.

To what religion do I belong? To none that thou mightst name. And wherefore to none? For Religion's sake.

SCHILLER.

Never did sculptor's dream unfold
A form which marble doth not hold
In its white block.

MICHEL ANGELO BUONAROTTI.

CHRISTIAN IDEALISM.

A CONSTITUENCY will create its own representatives. After ages clamorous for philosophical supporters of the existing creed, there is no reason to question the sincerity of those thinkers who believe that, along with the virtues and graces enshrined by the earnest and ignorant people under the gloomy roof of Christian dogma, there may be set up also the pure ideals of Reason and Religion. Difficult as some find it to see anything but casuistry in the attempt of the Broad Church to uphold the Thirty-nine Articles with one hand, and the facts of Science with the other, one need not doubt that eminent Liberal Christians have convinced themselves that Christianity, rightly interpreted, includes the highest modern ideas of religion and philanthropy. The eye is the most cunning of painters, and, as Wordsworth says, brings to land and sea a light that never was upon them. There is no object that cannot be transfigured in the light of pious sentiment. For ages the serpent was supplicated and worshipped by

Turanian tribes, through fear of it; but when the Serpent-God comes in contact with the higher Jahvistic or Astral religions, which declare it accursed, and bid it crawl on its belly in the dust for ever, does it obey? Nay, it is caught up by the higher faith; it climbs on the staff of Moses, of Æsculapius, of Mercury; its spots are raised to typify the adorable stars of heaven, its coil is the circle of eternity, its curve is the tracery of the rainbow.

The sacrifice of men to the king-serpent in the realm of Dahomey is far removed from the saying of the Hindu Scripture: "Justice is so dear to the heart of Nature, that if in the last day one atom of Injustice should be found, the Universe would shrivel like a snake-skin to cast it off for ever." The distance between the deadly reptile in the dust, and "the serpent that is lifted up," is not more vast than that between the Cross that leads Constantine and that which fills the eye of Channing.

What worshipful ideal has not the ingenious mind of man managed to stuff into the onion,—with its layers repeating in miniature the planetary envelopes of Chaldæan astronomy,—and manifold other things intrinsically mean, which it found representing some crude notion or ignorant fear of savage tribes! The advancing religion begins with attempting to exterminate that which it finds, but generally ends by compromising with it. It breathes a new life through existing forms.

The result of this process is, that whatever now chooses to call itself Christianity will be found only some chapter in the intellectual and moral history of the race. One age exaggerated personal details concerning Jesus; another petrified his tropes into dogmas: each finds in his teachings an alphabet ready to spell the sentence desired of it; and each interpreter, fired with the spirit of his age, feels himself a crusader rescuing the Holy Faith from infidel corruptions. Here is our mystic of to-day, for example, who finds all the Nineteenth Century covered by Christ. He has suffered under Alexandria, and been buried under Rome; now shall he rise as an Englishman, an American. "Justification by faith is honesty in trade," cries the radical; "and regeneration is Socialism." "I am determined," cries the abolitionist, "to know nothing among you but the black man and him enslaved." "Every supper must be the Lord's supper," says the dietetic apostle. And similarly the birth from a virgin, baptism, and all the mysteries, are made to do duty on the teeming platforms.

In an old, small, dismal room, I heard one haranguing his slender auditory in this fashion:

"A measuring-worm lifting itself upward, then prone upon the earth; a serpent, star-spotted, flower-spotted, slipping from one skin to another, yet ever surrounding the earth; the climbing, falling sea;—by such types have mankind, in many lands and ages, expressed their perception of the peristaltic movement of the universe. Man looks up to the wondrous heavens, and awe, the mother of worship, is born within him: the needs of earth drag him back again, and the lowest objects are adored. From materialistic chaos, and the supplication of deadly reptiles, inspired by dread, comes the rebound to astronomic religion. From the fatal oppression of the stars, which could look pitilessly down on adoring task-masters and groaning bondsmen, the eye turns earthward again. Out of the silent mythologic heavens one star alone shines for the wise men, the star moving westward, to disappear there where its glory is born on the earth; and 'Glory to God in the highest' begins to mean good will to men. The poets of an era, they are the sons of the morning, theirs is the angel-chorus; not from the legends of apostles, but from the full hearts that soar into song, comes the grandeur of a people turning from Cæsar on his throne to a peasant on his ass. This man, then,—the carpenter's son, come of our meanest village, without place to lay his head,—hath the truth in his heart, palpable to him as to Cæsar his sceptre; he, in his loneliness and poverty, is the favourite and son of God! Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that can pierce through its glittering shows, and see this Nazarene peasant to be the son of God? From that moment the old heavens begin to fade; on the seer's eye shines already the new heaven, to whose every tint the new earth must respond. The procession of growths on earth must follow the procession of seasons in the sky. A new firmament of ideas vaults above man, and each must trace itself on the sod of human life.

"'There is nothing new under the sun,' said the sage. 'Behold, I make all things new,' said the seer. A thousand revolutions germinated when the people knelt before a right and true, and a poor, man. He was born amid the wild winter, said the poets; his infant head was laid low amid the beasts of the stall: his cause must struggle with the hostile elements of an icy conservatism; its helpless infancy must be confided to donkeys, who shall mingle many a bray with this new gospel. All the old fables about Jahve, Zeus, and the rest, shall swathe this babe. Nevertheless, to us this child is born; where he enters idols shall fall, oracles be struck dumb, and all the signs of the heavens hold themselves honoured in weaving an aureole about the brow of a Man. This babe shall consecrate every babe; this mechanic shall establish the dignity of labour; this pauper shall liberate slaves and strike off the burdens of the poor.

"Slowly, however, and not without another backward swing of the pendulum. Not easily do Kings and priests surrender their power, though they may be quite willing to baptise it in names beloved of the people. What cares your priest whether the oracle that overpowers the common sense he fears be named Delphos, Church, Pope, or Bible? What cares the King whether he rule by authority of Jupiter or of Jesus, so that the masses look upon his Kingdom with awe, as identical with the Kingdom of God? Can High-Priest or ambitious monarch afford to waste all this enthusiasm about one Jesus of Nazareth? The Scribes and Pharisees hate him, but the people tread one upon another to see and hear him. Pilate knows well where his Roman master's interests lie, and steadily sets himself to save Jesus—as some think, did save him, cheating the cross of its victim. The French usurper to-day affixes the seal of his dynasty to the poor man's title to his cot, and says: 'If I fall, your title falls with me.' The conqueror of the past invested his tenure with a name that had become the treasure of the poor. The priesthoods hasten to array their gods in Christian garb, and twine the superstitions by which they exist about the Cross. And now, on the banner floating from palace and temple, there is a cross, with 'Hoc signo vinces' beneath it; a cross, however, nearly resembling the sword by which Christianity was overcome while it conquered, to be transmitted to this day as the most powerful defender of every wrong against which Jesus hurled his great heart. The last of the Cæsars held the stirrup of a Christian Pontiff; so far had that religion, which Tacitus found so despicable, triumphed. But the emperor knew his menial service would be fully paid. These Western Nations have coined the hearts' blood of many generations to pay for that fatal triumph.

"When the cross, from being a slave's gallows, shone out in the sky as the imperial symbol of Constantine, it marked the reaction of the world from the religion represented in the lowliness and simple humanity of the Nazarene peasant. Skyward again went the mind of man, and saw Christ there blending with the constellations of gods and goddesses, who also, no doubt, had been toiling and suffering men and women, raised now into barren abstractions by a similar force. And when Christianity turned from the earth and man, whom it had consecrated, to attend to God and his heavens, the ancient deities mounted to their niches in its temple, not, however, as of old, in their warm living and life-giving forms, —in those forms they now haunted the earth as demons,—but as a celestial court, in cold apotheosis. Not duty to man, who needed it, but to God, who needed it not; not fidelity to the world, but contempt and hatred of it; not human virtue, but rites and prayers, recounting to God the items of his magnificence; not mercy, but sacrifice, in which reason and human affection replaced as victims the roasted flesh he was formerly thought to enjoy; not actual men, but fictitious angels;—these became the insignia of the poor wayside preacher of justice, love, and peace. To seek his sepulchre over the slaughtered bodies of his brothers; to adore him as God, and kill all who did not; to invoke him as a deity one day of the week, and crucify him as a man through the rest: so did the dead Jesus reënthrone every wrong against which the living Jesus had protested. To a Pope willing to limit the real Christ to another planet altogether, while investing every scheme of selfishness and ambition with the sanctity of his name, why should not a Cæsar be stirrup-holder?

"Cæsar still lives; but under him, as before, Jesus suffers. Once more is he buried in the rich man's tomb. Will he rise again to be, as at first, the lowly friend of man?"

None ventured an answer. But as I went away I met a child astride a stick horse, beguiling himself with the pretence that he was carried by that which he carried; and the question, "Will Christ rise again?" seemed to me to depend upon another: how long will endure the religious infancy of the world, which, after Jesus has been made to follow and reflect every ascent and descent of society for fifty generations, still holds the illusion that he carries, but is not carried?

IX.

THE CROSS.

I desire that whatever merits I may have gained by good works may fall upon other people. May I be born again with them in the heaven of the blessed, be admitted to the family of Mi-le, and serve the Buddha of the Future!

Hiouen-thsang.

Firmian merely replied: "More than one Saviour has already died for the earth and man; and I am convinced that Christ will one day take many pious human beings by the hand, and say to them: 'Ye, too, have suffered under Pilates.'"

Jean Paul Richter.

Far easier to condemn his injurers,
Than for the tongue to reach his smallest worth.

Michel Angelo Buonarotti.

THE CROSS.

NEARLY all the incidents of my pilgrimage were connected with places close around my London home. Once, however, I found myself at the ancient convent of Troitska (Trinity), in Russia. Among other things which I saw there was a little plate of agate, set with costly jewels, bearing on it a picture of the Cross, with a human figure upon it, and a kneeling monk with clasped hands stretched out toward it. All this it was declared was in the grain of the agate when it was found in its quarry. As the work of Nature it had been adored and adorned by the Metropolitan Plato, and by him bequeathed to the convent. So delicately were the figures inwrought with the crystal, that it seemed almost as marvellous as a work of art as it could be if considered a natural production. And though I was forced to conclude that it was an ingenious instance of the pious frauds one meets at every step in priest-ridden countries, the fact was still before me that the Cross must have been very deep in human nature before any artist could have laboured so hard to represent it as dear to physical nature. Indeed, no other symbol reaches so far back in the religious history of the race. Jesus spoke to those around him of bearing the Cross, long before he saw it raised on his own path; and though some have fancied that he in using, and his disciples in comprehending, the phrase, foresaw the end awaiting him, there is reason to believe that it came to him as a surprise and a terror, and that he felt as if God had forsaken him because he was not rescued from it. The truth is, it was a symbol in many lands long before it was adopted by Christianity.

We read of many ancient and modern religions, of gods many and lords many, all of them surrounded with fables and symbols; and at first sight it seems amazing that the human mind could invent so many. But when they come to be sifted by Comparative Mythology, we are rather astonished to find there are so few. The myths of the New Testament are repetitions of those of the Old, mingled with those of Greece; and the mythology of Greece is mainly a modification of that of Egypt. But most of these, again, had previously done duty in Chaldæa, Arabia, and Persia. There is but one religion, as there is but one animal. Superstition has an old stock of sacred legends, and Moses, Zoroaster, Gautama, Jesus, have been successively dressed from the same old wardrobe; until now, when they are threadbare, we can trace every shred of them back to the first crude speculations with which man looked out upon the mystery above and around him.

Of all the symbols, the most universal was the Cross. The gods, said Plato, have built this universe after the sign of the Cross. One finds the Cross raised on old Druidical stones in Brittany, with peasants kneeling around. Such pedestals have been selected by priests to indicate the triumph of Christ over paganism; but some, at least, of the ancient temples where they stand are themselves cruciform, and the Christian Cross only a later leaf out of that old stem.

It has had many meanings. It has had a serpent twined about it, and a man nailed on it. It has signified generation in one age, and regeneration in another. Archæology may find some of the many languages it has spoken; but it is probable that the interpretation which the human heart has gradually fixed upon it is the foundation of all crosses, and that we may now accept it as a symbol of sacrifice, whose significance will grow as the religious sentiment grows.

In ordinary times it is difficult for us to appreciate the power of a symbol. Poets and orators have told us how long the old British flag has borne the battle and the breeze: on that symbol every line has been traced by some epoch, and the heroic achievements of centuries are summed up in its devices. Yet we pass it commonly without notice. But let a war break out between England and some foreign country to-day, and to-morrow the old flag would float out from a million houses like blossoms in Spring. Faces would flush and eyes grow moist as they saw it borne along the streets by determined men. A heat like that of which it was born would bring out its ancient inscriptions. And so, when wrong seeks again to crucify right, a holy light gathers around the old banner of religious devotion. When John Brown, of Harper's Ferry, was about to be hung for his armed attack on Slavery in Virginia, all saw a new shape in the gallows erected for him, from the negro preacher, who said to his swarthy hearers, "John Brown is your Saviour; he dies for you; his blood will redeem you,"—up to Emerson, who said, "If he shall die on the gallows, he will make it glorious like a Cross;" and Victor Hugo, who drew a weird picture of the hanging man, and wrote under it, *Ecce!* The story of one struggling cause is the story of all. The Smithfield stake, the thumbscrew, the Virginian gallows, the social ostracism of a heretic,—they are all crosses, whatever the actual shape they take.

Dr. Rowland Williams said to English Christians: "You will never convert the Hindoos to the Trinity, or to our form of Christianity, any more than you can grow our flowers in their soil or climate; you can only christianise them by showing that our religion is a higher development of what their religion teaches—justice and self-denial." In a country whose priests condemned Dr. Williams for so saying, and crucified, to the best of their ability, the man who dared be a Bishop after writing in the same book with him, we can hardly hope that his admonition will produce any effect; we may look rather for a continuance of the missionary effort which returns the cross to the purposes it served while as yet it was a Roman gibbet, and magnifies Jesus as the industrious captain of gunboats, ready to fire on all villages which will not accept him. But the poor pagans cannot so long bear the cross laid upon them by Christendom without discerning some of its deeper meanings. The first Roman Catholic missionaries who tried to plant their Church in Japan were slain. It was made a criminal offence to name the name of Christ in Japan. But lately a Japanese man cautiously unfolded from his garment one of their old crosses, and showed it to an American officer in that region, saying it had been handed down as a precious heirloom in his family. He knew no Christian or Catholic dogma, but only that those who cherished that cross had one by one suffered and died for it. So much alone had power to survive.

Many errors are the distorted shadows of truths. So much is true even of vicarious sacrifice, that one thing yields its life to feed the life of another: the corn of wheat is victim of the full ear; the mother is consumed before her babe, as by a flame of devotion. It is true, also, that Jesus, like every martyr, bears on his cross the sins of us all. The spirit that nailed him there is the spirit which animates every rejection of truth, or persecution of truth's messengers. The blood of Abel comes upon every generation that partakes the spirit of Cain.

But sacrifice—a word meaning simply a religious act—has been perverted to mean the parting with some interest to please God. Even educated people speak of the virtues of self-sacrifice, as if it were other than a relic of human sacrifice. Yet even in the days of human sacrifice there was rarely a thought of offering up the "self" to the god; rather it was the soul parting with flesh to attain a higher joy. The hope of rejoining her husband made the flame of his pyre cool to the Indian widow's heart. It is unworthy of many who use the phrase to speak of the preference of rectitude to animalism, or of justice to wealth, as the sacrifice of self. 'Tis the realisation of self. The yielding of a lower for a higher pleasure is the epicurean art of him who will feast on the dainties of existence. The monkish legend that the Cross of Christ was made of the wood of Eden's Tree of Life has more truth in it. Whether the Cross were originally a rudely-designed tree, or whether a phallic symbol, it meant fruit and birth, and only such labours and pangs as attend these; and so far as it is rescued from the Christian superstition, which has degraded it to the altar of a human sacrifice, it will mean man bearing his appointed fruit,—finding therein his supremest self.

The Cross has its roots deeper in nature than the priests of Troitska have found, and its fruit is perennial. The light of sacred story does indeed, as says the hymn, gather around it. As out of the old heaven of stars worshipped by Chaldæan shepherds one star came to point the way to a holier fire kindled on earth, out of the fading constellations of Christian mythology the Cross will still stand to guide the pilgrim. There are more languages upon it than Pilate ever inscribed; it has its word for every age or land, and for every conflict between what is base and what is noble without and within us. The old proverbs about it are sufficiently translatable. Every Cross hath its inscription. The Cross will put to flight any demon. Crosses are ladders to heaven. No cross, no crown.

For this symbol denotes a thing done for the right. It is action alone that supplies to sentiment the sun and rain without which it must remain barren. And where right and true action is, there shines the sign which illuminates all true Scriptures. Comte has been counted insane when he named his servant-woman in his Calendar of Saints; but it may have been done in his sanest moment. The radiance of all suns is in the minutest sunbeam; the humblest duty done has God at its core.

So returned I from Troitska to London, passing many old crosses on the way,—memorial crosses, market crosses, spire-crosses. They were but shadowy fingers pointing to others meekly borne by exiles and heretics in far-off islands and obscure homes. These I sought out, and some said of their cross, It is a thorny stem, but bears roses. But most of them knew not of any cross. They were like the Puritan Pilgrims, who could not endure the sight of any church cross, because the bleak shore and Arctic sky of New England shaped one too real to be represented by that which had become the symbol of crucifiers rather than of the crucified.

So saith the pilgrim to each who has found his post in the conflict, to each who has caught some gleam of the ideal shining over his earthly lot,—Name not thy cross, but bear it, and it will bear thee.

X.

VIA CRUCIS.

Quosque patiere, bone Jesu!
Judæi te semel, ego sæpius crucifixi;
Illi in Asia, ego in Britannia,
    Gallia, Germania.
Bone Jesu, miserere mei et Judæorum!

SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

VIA CRUCIS.

ARE human sacrifices still offered to idols in England?

What is an idol? It is anything set up as having an authority independent of reason and conscience, or requiring a service not primarily based on considerations of human welfare. It need not be a visible image. Let it command the action without persuading the reason, let the service paid it be for its own majesty, in however slight a degree, and not purely for the well-being of man: it is an idol—be it book, creed, or holy day. He who conceives of a deity governing not entirely for the governed, or one who cares whether men obey or disobey, believe or deny his existence, for his own sake, conceives of an idol.

Every idol has human sacrifices offered to it. An idol may be recognised by this—that a service is paid it because claimed; such service, whether it prove in some respects advantageous to man or not, involving a sacrifice of so much freedom and of so much devotion to humanity. Those sacrificed need not be bound and slaughtered bodily on an altar; the principle is in action where the least thing which conscience and common sense would prescribe, were there no God at all, for the development or happiness of mankind, is set aside for the glory, or at the demand, of a deity. The Nestorian Christians of the mountain districts will kill a man found travelling on Sunday; but if the health of London labourers, or their mental improvement, be subordinated to the religious observance of the same day, they are just as really sacrificed. The Skopsis of Russia mutilate themselves in obedience to Christ's unmistakable commendation of those "who make themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake;" but if, in obedience to a supposed divine authority, a man believes anything that, upon human statement, he would reject as incredible, he has mutilated himself far more seriously than the Russian fanatic: he has sacrificed his reason. Health, intellect, instinct, culture, happiness,—if these be sacrificed, how can it be said there is no human sacrifice?

On Good Friday, I went with a learned Mussulman to follow about the London Docks a clergyman celebrating the "Stations of the Cross." The Cross, in black, was by the gates, on the walls, over the altar; to it the priests and their people knelt, crossing themselves. Some visitors seemed astonished—not so my friend from Calcutta. He was already familiar with symbols covering temple walls. And when the procession started to follow the veiled cross through the streets, he needed not to draw upon his oriental imagination to see how slight an increase of thickness in the veil was required to make it a procession of Brahmins following the goddess Durgha with hymns; or of Mohammedans following with funereal march the image of Hoosain, the Prophet's grandson, slain by the man whose guest he was.

Through many wretched streets we passed. By our sides thronged the ragged, the diseased, the miserable; women of the street, caricaturing the hymns with loud screaming; scoffing men and boys. Many long hymns about "Jesu" were sung: over and again the clergyman, in his quaint skull-cap and monkish dress, told the story of the ancient tragedy. At no time did Calvary excite so much sympathy as the wailing of a wounded child near one of the "Stations." The preacher preached without feeling, the priests sang with hollow voices, and no one along this Way of the Cross seemed at any time moved, save one woman who, in a moment of enthusiasm, hurled a large bowl at the procession, with a wild malediction on "the Puseyites." The bowl struck pretty sharply the hand that now records the incident; but the priest claimed the martyrdom of the malediction, and said at the next

Station, "Do you fear being called a Puseyite?—we must bear our Cross!"

The Mussulman, as I have intimated, did not find the affair very novel, and his patience gave way; but before he left me, on the way to the Fourth Station, he inquired particularly into the meaning of Good Friday, and why it was celebrated in all the churches; and I was constrained to tell him that on that day, according to the Christian religion, a great human sacrifice was offered up to appease the offended majesty of God. The Cross was an altar, the bleeding man upon it was there by divine requirement, in atonement for the sins of the world. And are the people willing to accept salvation through the death of a good man? Even so. But is this the view of the masses of Christians, or only of a few eccentric religionists? Alas, it is only the eccentric few who do not believe it! And how far does this idea affect the social and moral life of the people? It penetrates every vein of our civilisation; there is no man, woman, or child in this kingdom who is not in some way and degree—morally, mentally, physically, or politically—sacrificed to the God who, as this people believes, was only restrained from sending us all to eternal tortures by his satisfaction through that human sacrifice.

This Cross which attracted two or three hundred curious followers in the East of London was only the shadow of the actual one borne through this land day by day, and year by year. Could this people only have had for that one day the eye of the worshipper of Allah, they would have found their Good Friday a mirror, and in it beheld the fearful face of the religion that is turning their heart to stone. They would have left their clergy and their choristers to pray and chant to empty pews, and gathered like the weeping daughters of Jerusalem at Trafalgar Square. It was there the crucified peasant really stood that day, crying: "Is it nothing to you, O all ye that pass by, that these my brothers hunger unfed and shiver unclothed, and that in the wretched dens they have left are pale women and children with the nails of poverty and disease piercing their hands and feet? Spare your sympathies for a cross and victim turned to dust these many ages, and know that every coin that goes to the honour of that victim, when it might save these miserable ones, changes him from a friend to a crucifier of men!"

Or the worshippers of the Churches, had they possessed the Mussulman's eye, might have gathered together in St. Bartholomew's Church, to see twenty-five aged widows crouching on the floor to pick up twenty-five sixpences. Long years ago a wealthy lady bequeathed money, that on every Good Friday twenty-five such widows should find on her gravestone as many sixpences, to be theirs if they could and would stoop for the same. The lady's gravestone is now undiscoverable; but here are the poor old women torturing their stiff joints to get to the sixpences. "Why not," murmured one or two present,—"why not give the poor creatures the sixpences without all that ado?" Little did such realise the revolutionary character of their murmurs. The chemist tried to draw the birth-mark from his wife's cheek; the birth-mark vanished —the wife lay dead. The old custom in St. Bartholomew's may fall into desuetude; but to abolish it consistently were to touch the tenure of every institution in England. What are all our charities, our endowments, but the picking up of sixpences from the gravestones of the dead? What is our education but the deciphering of literatures that are but the mouldering epitaphs of other lands and ages? What is our religion, what are these celebrations of Good Friday, but a crouching of human beings, with painful humiliations, to take from a hero's grave the treasures he had earned? We are ruled by dead men. Every acre of ground is following the wills of those whose names are utterly forgotten by the generations they are still able to feed or starve. The purest reason or justice must bow to the precedents of bleached crania. The Constitution is the collective wisdom of the vast Parliament of skeletons by which we are governed. In Church and State the living generations are sacrificed to their ancestors. All of which was sufficiently visible on Good Friday to every eye not itself the product of the System; and it is the true *Via Crucis* around the world!

I was one of a horror-stricken company which listened to the fearful story of an Indian family, whose parents reared and cherished in their home a crocodile, regarding it as a god. When the reptile grew large enough, it devoured one of the children. The parents, so far from thinking any the worse of the beast, looked upon it as a favour to the child to be so incorporated with their deity. Of course the last penny of our company was at the service of any missionary ready to go to the region where the incident was said to have occurred.

But there are intelligent Indians in England who might have read in the newspapers of April 9, 1870, the following:—

> THE "PECULIAR PEOPLE" AGAIN.—At the last Orsett Petty Sessions, John Baker, a man in respectable circumstances, was charged before the Revs. W. H. Richards, J. Windle, and J. Blomfield, with having neglected to provide necessary medical aid for his child, Jesse Baker, aged two years and eight months, who, it was presumed, had been allowed to die without any medical assistance.
>
> This is the fourth case of helpless children belonging to this sect, now very numerous in Essex, having been allowed so to die within the past few weeks.
>
> *Mr. A. H. Hunt*, clerk to the Orsett Board of Guardians, attended for the prosecution, and stated that the summonswas taken out by the guardians, who considered it now their duty to take the matter up, owing to several deaths having lately occurred, and prosecute according to the powers given to them by a recent statute, 31st and

32nd Vic. c. 122, sec. 37, which enacts that where parents allow their children to die without medical aid they shall be liable to six months' imprisonment. This was the second child the defendant had within the past few weeks allowed to die.

Mr. A. W. Mercer, surgeon, was next called, and his evidence went to show that he was ordered by the Coroner to make a *post-mortem* examination of the body of another child belonging to the defendant, and while performing the operation he saw the second child now alluded to in the present case lying very ill. As the first child had been allowed to die without medical assistance, he strongly urged the mother and three other women to permit him to give the child some medicine, as it was very dangerously ill; but the mother and the other women positively refused him permission to give the child anything. He then advised them to put a plaster upon it and give it stimulants, but that they also refused.

Ann Cunningham stated that she was one of the three sisters who attended the child. It had every nourishment, but had no medicine. Everything that was possible to do for it according to their religion was done. The elders were sent for, and they laid hand on it, and they anointed it with the holy oil.

That being the case for the prosecution, the magistrates asked the defendant what he had to say to the charge.

The Defendant.—What I have to say is this: the Lord saved me from my sins eleven years ago, and I now go according to the Scripture, and follow Christ. In the days of Christ, just before he departed, he said, "If I depart, I will send the Comforter unto you;" and it was that Spirit which I received eleven years ago that guided me to fulfil his commands in this case. The Word of God tells me to pray, and that if any are sick, let him send for the elders of the Church to anoint the sick with oil, and pray over him. This is what I believe in, and what I have done; and if my child had not been sick unto death, it would have recovered; but as it did not recover, it was the Lord's will that it should die. In the last chapter of St. Mark, does it not say of them that believe, "In my name shall they cast out devils; . . . they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover"?

Here a number of brethren and sisters who were in the court shouted out—"Yes, yes; blessed be his name!" and other similar ejaculations.

The Chairman.—But there is nothing in that to tell you not to send for a doctor.

The Defendant.—There is no passage in the whole book where I am told to send for a doctor. The command is, "Send for the elders of the Church, and let them lay hands on him and anoint him with oil."

One of the elders of the Church, named John Butcher, was next called, who stated that he was a wharfinger, and one of the elders; the child's mother sent for him, and he went and laid hands upon it, prayed over it, and anointed it with oil, on several occasions.

The Clerk.—What name do your denomination give themselves?

Witness.—Just what the Bible says we are—"a chosen and a peculiar people, holy unto the Lord." We are not ashamed of our name. There were other elders sent for besides me. We had a prayer-meeting in the room, and there was a lot of us there the night the child died. We held the meeting from seven till nine.

The Chairman.—What would you do yourself if you had a leg broken? You would send for a medical man then, would you not?

Witness.—If I live unto God, I shall not have a broken leg; if I do not, I might be liable to such a chastisement. God has promised to take care of the righteous, and there have been no broken legs amongst us.

After very voluminous evidence, the bench retired for consultation.

The Chairman, on returning, said they gave the defendant credit for sincerity, but they were bound to convict. Nevertheless, as it was under a recent Act, not generally known, they would exercise a power given to them to discharge him now on entering into his own recognisances to come up for sentence when called upon. They hoped such a case would not occur again.

The Defendant.—Well, I mean to go on exactly as I have done; and whether I break the law or not, I mean to follow Christ, and put my trust in him. I bless God now for having taken my case up. It is he that has come to my assistance now.

Here a number of the brethren and sisters shouted, "Yes, yes; praise him and trust in him."

The parties then left the court, evidently under the belief that the defendant was a rescued martyr.

No doubt, if the reverend magistrates who heard this case had been so inclined, they could have strengthened the case of the Peculiar People. They might, for instance, have reminded them of the warning against physicians represented in the case of King Asa: "In his disease he sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians. And Asa slept with his fathers." They might have remembered the case of the woman who had an issue of blood, "and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse," but who was healed by touching the garment of Jesus. At any rate, they must have known that the position taken up by the parents was impregnably based upon the Bible, and it is not likely they will ever be brought up to receive sentence.

But can any honest man deny that the four children thus slain before the Bible were any the less victims to an idol than the Hindoo child devoured by the crocodile-god of the Ganges?

In the same newspaper which reports the trial of the Peculiar People there is an account of a great meeting held at St. James's Hall to advocate religious education. It was attended by several Dukes, several Earls and Lords, and by thirteen Members of Parliament. The Chairman, an Earl, said that "in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred the religion of the working man was simply what he read in the Bible," and that what they demanded was that "the Bible, and the teaching of the

Bible, should be for the children of the Empire an essential."

What does the working man derive from the Bible? Not long ago a man named Mobbs was executed for murdering a boy, from whom he had received no provocation whatever. The entire absence of any apparent motive for the deed led the prisoner's counsel to put forward a plea of insanity. Before his execution, Mobbs made a confession, in which he traced his deed to a morbid condition of mind produced by reading two things; one was a copy of the *Illustrated Police News*, with a pictorial account of the Alton murder; the other, the story of Cain and Abel. This was the food which fed the wild beast in Mobbs into fatal strength. When the confession was published, there was a great outcry against the *Illustrated Police News.* That was to be expected:

> The dog that's lame is much to blame.

The editor of the *Police News* said in his letter to the *Times:* "If a picture representing the Alton tragedy acted as an incentive to the commission of crime, in an equal degree did the book to which the prisoner alludes in the following passage: 'I had a book about Cain and Abel in my dinner-basket; that book was given me by my grandfather just before he died.'" Nevertheless, this editor, wincing under public censure, promises to be more cautious in future. But has any disseminator of the Bible shown similar compunction? Is not the Bible Society as busy to-day as ever taking care that wherever there is a Mobbs he shall have the story of Cain and Abel in his dinner-basket? Are not Earls, Dukes, Lords, and Members of Parliament—even such friends of the working man as Thomas Hughes—declaring that "for the children of the Empire an essential" shall be that they shall be taught to read and regard as the Word of God a book which contains stories so gross, sensual, and cruel, that if they were contained in any other book the police would make a raid upon the book-shop where it was sold? The Judge who sentenced Mobbs told him he was instigated to commit his crime by the Devil. Mobbs, about to die, says one instigator of his crime was the fourth chapter of Genesis. But a legion of Mobbses studying murder from the pages of the Bible cannot move the Idol, in obedience to which we are taxed to place the stories of Cain and Abel, Joseph and Potiphar's wife, Lot and his daughters, Jael and Sisera, David and Uriah, Solomon with his 700 wives and 300 concubines, and a hundred other atrocities, into the hands of apprentices, prisoners, and little boys and girls.

Alas for our children! The stony Idol is unmoved by the accumulated evidence that the school-children ignore what is pure and beautiful in the

Bible,—that being as far beyond their young experience as Kant's metaphysics are beyond their intelligence,—and dwell upon the stories they can comprehend. Millions of hearts and minds first soiled by contact with these obscene pages are offered by each generation as a holocaust to the Idol of Christendom. We notice the more salient instances, but the whole case can alone be appreciated if we remember that, where hearts fall before temptations which others withstand, it implies a secret moral decay at work beforehand. The weakening of moral forces in human beings through the perusal of the Bible in early life proceeds during an age not easily subjected to scrutiny by themselves or others; but no one who remembers his or her school-days can fail to recall scandals of a kind that have hardly names, much less reports in detail, outside of that book. Is not this human sacrifice?

What has the Bible done for the people who, as the Earl said, "in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred" find there their only religion? It has been the text-book of the oppressor in every age. It has murdered thousands of innocent people with its sentence, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." It binds millions to-day under the tyrant's foot with its commands: "Obey the magistrate;" "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves;" "Resist not evil." In America, slavery reigned for two generations from a throne formed out of the Bible, which showed Jehovah proclaiming a slave-code from Sinai, and Paul aiding slave-hunters, admonishing slaves, even if they could be free, to prefer their chains, and furnishing the motto of the slave-driver, "Servants, obey your masters." Abolitionism arose in America contemporaneously with heresy; it was pioneered by unbelievers in the authority of the Bible; and the last link to yield in the slave's chain was the link forged by that book.

The world had to wait for a government founded on the equality and freedom of mankind until such infidels as Paine, Jefferson, Franklin, and Adams came into power; and when that government was corrupted by the Mosaic and Patriarchal institution of Slavery, four millions of negroes had to await the rule of a President who early in life wrote an essay advocating the religious opinions of Thomas Paine, and who, when besought on the hustings to deny a charge of infidelity brought against him, said he "would die first," and admitted that he was not a believer in Christianity. A friend of President Lincoln stole and burnt his essay on *Infidelity* (1835), but the world does not need it to know that the Edict of Emancipation could not, any more than the Declaration of Independence, have been the work of a believer in the Bible. The author of the *Life of Jesus* told me, as I walked with him on the banks of the Neckar, that he was originally induced to write that work by the conviction that Germany could never be free so long as the people believed in Supernaturalism. A people, he said, who have an authority acting above, and not through, their faculties, are so far intellectually paralysed. They are in the power of an idol, and can be easily overawed by it; when it is held up, the common sense goes out of them, and they will yield rights which no earthly power, unaided by superstition, could extort from them.

How is it in England? Are the faculties of the people acting healthily? The English people have a love of truth; yet even after the Convocation of Bishops has been forced to admit that the English version of the Bible contains thousands of errors of translation, it is possible for eminent personages to resist the correction of those errors by raising fears that the place of the book in the popular veneration may not survive any alteration of its words! The English people have a strong sense of justice; yet so paralysed is it in the presence of the Bible, that they are ready to compel those who believe that book to be one the worst possible for children, to furnish money to distribute it among their neighbours' children. Mr. Mill must pay to have the children of the poor taught that there is an eternal hell and devils; Sir Charles Lyell circulates the view that the world was made in six days; Professor Huxley is affirming to the working classes the striking piece of palæontology that in the time of Balaam there was a talking ass! Were there no idol in the case, would the English people, at the end of so many centuries of struggle for the rights of conscience, sacrifice those rights, so far as they belong to the freethinking minority, and force them to contribute to the dissemination of what they hold to be great and dangerous error?

I have told of the crocodile devouring the Hindoo child, and of the four English children thrown by their Christian parents into the jaws of death, and these fearful child-sacrifices may seem very far from our own homes. But there are sacrifices and sacrifices, and there are few homes in Christendom wherein, in some form or other, the children are not victims of the Bible. To a royal sensualist, called in that book the wisest of men, is attributed the proverb, "Spare the rod and spoil the child." That sentiment has been the cause of more cruelty to childhood, wrong to human nature, and bad training,—it has made more cowardly, deceitful, sneaking men and women,—than any other sentiment ever uttered. Entering every school and every home with the authority of a divine command, the rod has appealed to the meanest motives, and fostered every animalism. The child's will must be broken. But why not break its back? You would make the child a facsimile of yourself; you will "bring down its spirit" to your own level, and teach it that the evil of wrong is physical suffering, and that the beauty of holiness is a sugar-plum; and yet perhaps you wonder that the world is so full of sly and selfish people! It is true, indeed, that some grow to be noble and manly despite the rod, for broken wills can sometimes knit like broken bones; but on many faces that are mere ciphers appended to the real figures of the world,—foreheads that are but the graves of individual minds,—the wise are reading the monition, *Spare the child and spoil the rod.*

To this dreary list of sacrifices offered up to the Idol must be added the Bible itself. Invaluable as a record of the early life, the superstitions and aspirations, the heroisms and speculations of mankind, the student may find here the most complete and rounded chapter of his own biography. Taken not as food but as facts, there is use for the faults and follies it records, as well as for its true thoughts—even as in nature the poisons have their place as well as the fruits. But regarded as an authority over the reason, which alone can read it discriminatingly, the light that is in it is turned to darkness; its prophets are made to veil their own visions as reflected in ours, and men whose excellence consisted in confronting the popular creed, and refusing to kneel to the conventional idols, are quoted to make men servile and timid before the synagogues, and faithless to the great inspirations and scriptures, of their own day.

Such is the religion which finds in Good Friday its most solemn fast, and in a human sacrifice its central idea. But across the darkness of the day, which symbolises the ignoble sacrifice of us all, there was this year one gleam of light. At the Crystal Palace, some thousands of people collected and played "Kiss-in-the-Ring" all day. Some antiquaries tell us that the game may have been an ancient pagan rite or festival. Possibly the merry-makers at the Crystal Palace were unconsciously celebrating some prehistoric "Good Freyja's day." It is a reminder that all gods must die; and the eye of faith may look forward to a future when the solemnities of Good Friday will have become sports, and its associations, including the Stations of the Cross, call for archæological ingenuity.

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XI.

PENTECOST.

Every prophet whom I send goeth forth to establish religion, not to root it up.

Thou wilt be asked, "By what dost thou know God?" Say, "By that which descendeth upon the heart;" for could that be proved false, souls would be utterly helpless. There is in thy soul a certain knowledge, before which, if thou display it to mankind, they will tremble like a branch agitated by the strong wind.

SASAN.

Devoutly look, and nought
But wonders shall pass by thee;
Devoutly read, and then
All books shall edify thee;
Devoutly speak, and men
Devoutly listen to thee;
Devoutly act, and then
The strength of God acts through thee.

RÜCKERT (*Wisdom of the Brahmin*).

PENTECOST.

I MADE my way to the door of the Archbishop's palace, meaning to attend a great Congress of Bishops therein convened from all parts of the world. An individual in livery at the door could not find on his list of delegates the See I represented, and refused me admission. Therefore I was fain to sit by the gate, and observe the prelates as they passed in. I could but think them the successors of those divines whom Milton called the sumptuously-cared-for "dividual movable" religions of the well-to-do people of his day, and they had been evidently "better breakfasted than he whose morning appetite would have gladly fed on green figs between Bethany and Jerusalem." As I looked, I saw ten thousand pounds walk in, and after him seven thousand, five thousand, and other goodly and portly figures. So far as I could see, the chapel they entered differed in some respects from the hill-sides and the fish-boats of Jerusalem and Galilee. And though one or two seemed heavily weighted with Colenso, whatever crosses they had seemed hardly heavy enough to make them faint.

After they had all gone in I listened, and, though the words were not easily distinguishable, they seemed, as intoned, to be: "We have done those things which we ought to have done, and have left undone those things that we ought to have left undone, and are altogether in the soundest condition." I may have mistaken the exact words used, but the tone was unmistakable. I also heard "Lord! Lord!" repeated many times. Soon after, I read a Pastoral Address which these Bishops had put forth. Every phrase in it was borrowed from ancient prophets and apostles, who, fortunately for our knowledge of them and their sayings, did not go quite so far back from their own times for language or thoughts with which to appeal to the people around them. No doubt there were in Paul's day prelates who addressed men in the phrases, and appealed to them against the sins, of fossil generations; but we know as little about them as posterity will know of the Bishops whom the late Archbishop of Canterbury convened in London.

Weary at last of sitting before the closed doors of the archiepiscopal palace, and the night coming on, I bent my steps to a dismal little room in the City, where had been called a meeting of Freethinkers. They were one and all poor people, many of them artisans. Some of them had seen the insides of prisons in the days when that was the answer of the Prince Regent to those who questioned whether he were Adonis and Mæcenas blended in one, or the argument of the Church to those who circulated Paine's *Age of Reason.* These aged ones here counted over their scars, recognised their triumphs, and handed their old flag—the prouder for its tatters—to the young who sat around them. There was brought in an aged woman who had witnessed the struggles of execrated infidels, and her dim eyes spoke, though her tongue could not, her *Nunc dimittis.* It was enough that Englishmen could think and utter their thoughts, could read and write, without fear. There were young men, and young women too, who rose and consecrated themselves with burning words to lives of devotion to "the Cause." Higher and higher came the tide of feeling; it overflowed in the tears of eyes happy with the vision of a liberated England; it swelled in eloquent speech, under which all bent as branches under a strong wind. Here was enthusiasm, devoutness, joy!

It was revealed to me in that moment that I sat with the followers of Moses, singing their songs in the Wilderness; with the first disciples of Ahmed, kneeling in the desert with eyes uplifted to the one Allah, before whom every idol must fall; with those who pressed out into the wilderness to listen to one clothed in camel's hair, who proclaimed the axe laid to the root of the tree. I knew this ancient fire kindling every eye, touching every tongue. It had burnt on altars through the long night of superstition; it had burnt in the unconsumed bush before Moses, and enveloped the burning mountain where Zoroaster stood; it had been kept by Vestals through temples long crumbled; Phœnixes had passed through it to renewed life; Prometheus had brought it from heaven to deify men; it had lighted Isis in her search for Osiris, and Demeter in her wanderings after Persephone; it had lit up the star of Bethlehem; it had flashed its lightnings from Sinai to Calvary; it had descended in cloven tongues on Galilean fishermen, and raised them to be apostles. And even as I detected the old, old fire in its new manifestation, behold, there entered in that meeting of infidels one with shining face, who said: "To-day have I wandered through London to find my mother, my sister, my brother. I sought them first among those who preside over the Church called after my name. But I knew them not. They on their cushions knew not me in my carpenter's garb, but suspended their cries of 'Lord! Lord!' until I could be put out. Then, as I passed by this room, I heard some at the door denouncing those within as 'infidels,' 'agitators,' 'heretics.' The familiarity of those phrases in old days led me to enter. And though you will not name my name, I read it on your foreheads; though you despise the gilded crosses of Churches, I see on each a heavier cross than any Christian has to bear in these days. I am content. He is not my brother who names my name, but he who will give his life to mankind. Take my hand, O my brothers, my sisters; for ye too wear thorns for crowns. My peace is yours, my joy is on your countenances. Ye are children of the Holy Ghost, for the Spirit of the Age is to each age its holiest breath, and special revelation. Your differences are nothing, your errors but little, in the presence of this breath which unites and inspires you to maintain the rights of Humanity, the sanctity of reason, the liberty of thought, and this high faith in the destiny of man to rise above all that afflicts and degrades him."

XII.

BUNHILL FIELDS.

Every drop of his blood had eyes that looked downward. He knew the heroes of 1776, but could not recognise those of to-day when he met them in the street.

Emerson *on Daniel Webster.*

There is a spirit which I feel that delights to do no evil, nor to revenge any wrong; but delights to endure all things, in hope to enjoy its own in the end. Its hope is to outlive all wrath and contention, and to weary out all exultation and cruelty, or whatever is of a nature contrary to itself. I found it alone, being forsaken. I have fellowship therein with them who lived in dens and desolate places of the earth, who through death obtained this resurrection, and eternal holy life.

James Naylor.

Set not thy foot on graves;
Care not to strip the dead
Of his sad ornament,
His myrrh, and wine, and rings,
His sheet of lead,
And trophies buried:
Go, get them where he earned them when alive,—
As resolutely dig or dive.

Emerson.

BUNHILL FIELDS.

UNDER the gray October sky I started forth to witness the formal re-opening of Bunhill, or Bone-hill, Cemetery. I passed by the spot where Cromwell after death hung on the gallows; by the old fields where the martyrs died, but where now the stately market stands; by the house where Milton was born, possibly by that where he hid himself from the wrath of the Restoration. "Milton, thou shouldst have lived to see this hour," when my Lord Mayor, and my Lord Shaftesbury, and Members of Parliament, and noted Clergymen, are coming together to compete for the best eulogy and profoundest homage to the men whom their predecessors hunted to their graves.

Around the vacant space in the centre of the great city huge factories stood roaring at their work. Their brick walls and big signs frowned upon the vacant ground, seeming to say, "Why is this waste? This parcel of ground, with its idle grave-stones, might at this moment be coining millions of pounds." But the commerce of London, surging up against the confines of the silent field, was there restrained as by a spell. Commerce had indeed made an effort to appropriate that ground, but had heard the command, Thus far, and no farther. The religious hearts of England had gathered round it, and formed a sacred circle which no pecuniary interests could overpass. And the silence of this field loudest chanted the requiem of those whose bones moulder in it. For here rest men and women who, while living, similarly withstood those potent interests which recoil before their dust, when self-interest said to them, Sell us your souls; do not stand by a faith which brings you only a crust of bread; give up those idle visions which are carrying you into prisons; take sides with us, and we will load your tables with plenty! The sacred circle in their breasts, whose walls did not then fall before such interests, finds its fit monument in the silent sanctity of Bunhill Fields, and in the sentiment which still finds something more useful than gold. The Unitarian Lord Mayor, the Nonconformist Member of Parliament, and the Nobleman of the Church of England, utter in accord the homage of the hour. Not one of them, it may be, believes the dogmas of Wesley, or Watts, or George Fox, or Lardner, or Defoe, or Bunyan; yet alike they bow before these mighty shades. For it is only in the present, where personal interests or prejudices are affected, that men raise their little creeds above essential nobleness and moral grandeur.

The ceremony was over. About one tomb especially the crowd gathered. On it lay the carved figure of John Bunyan. On one side is a picture of the pilgrim with his staff toiling under his burden; on the other, the burden has rolled off as he clasps the foot of the cross. It bears an inscription showing that it has been of late repaired under the presidency of an Earl whom I need not name. The same nobleman was good enough to patronise the Pilgrim in his address on the same day; he called the old tinker, with gracious familiarity, "a glorious old fellow." One was forced to reflect how different he was from the Earls who in old times conceived that the best place for Bunyan was Bedford Gaol. When the nobleman left I was fain to follow him, and the first thing he did was to pick up a hard stone and fling it at a man walking a little before him. The man turned: could I believe my eyes?—it was John Bunyan! The noble lord not only stoned this pilgrim, but called on the clergymen around him to do the same; and many of them did so. Wounded, the poor man went on his way, until, at last, he fainted. I followed, and asked him his name; but even as I did so, though the likeness to Bunyan remained, I saw that it was a certain heretical Bishop.

Returning again to the sepulchre garnished with the nobleman's name, with his denunciations of those who stoned the prophets of England still ringing in my ears, I sat down, alone now, before the tomb. "Alas!" I cried, "can men see the true and great only when their names are traced in dust? Shall we for ever go on raising the crosses of the past over our churches, and crucifying the sacred causes of to-day? It is easy to praise the Bunyans of three centuries ago; but how about their true brothers whom we meet in the street? When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith in the earth? or would not the very men who now worship his name crucify him, even as they crucify every sacred human cause which represents him?"

The lips of the stone figure seemed to smile with their old serenity, and the voice said, with a meaning gathered out of the intervening centuries, "Steadily believe concerning the things that are invisible."

I listened for some further word. Whether it was the whispering of the wind, or the hum of looms, or fancy's coinage of the voices in the street, it seemed as if there came to me, as I sat there, these words:—

"Yes, steadily believe and endure as seeing the invisible. There never was heroism, nor martyrdom, nor saintly devotion, which is not now discoverable in every part of the earth. Their sacred camp is ever near. Where the scholar is devoting his life to rescue the weak and ignorant; where the thinker gives his hand to the undowered cause of a hated truth; where the man of Science follows Nature with a faithful love, which refuses to divide its loyalty with superstition, whatever the bribe; where in loneliness, with courage and devotion, the gifted and the true are pursuing, amid doubt and misgiving, over crag and torrent, the Truth that has called to them,—there, be thou sure, are Bunyans, and Miltons, and Knoxes, and the next pilgrims in the procession of faithful souls that can never end. But do thou hasten hence. Not by the kissing of their bones, or the garnishing of their tombs, or the believing of their creeds, can the brave and free be honoured; but by an independence and fidelity like their own. He is most like Christ who stands as bravely before his Church (so called) as Christ did before the conventional creeds of his day. Rise and go hence; seek not to live by substituting for virtue of your own the praises of others' virtues; borrow not their oil for your lamp; heed thine own aim."

* * *

XIII.

THE OLD TABARD.

O thou who towerest above the flights of conjecture, opinion, and comprehension, whatever has been reported of thee we have heard and read; the congregation is dismissed, and life drawn to a close,—and we still rest in our first encomium of thee.

SAADI.

Nor times shall lack when, while the work it plies,
  Unsummoned powers the blinding film shall part,
And, scarce by happy tears made dim, the eyes
  In recognition start!

CLOUGH.

THE OLD TABARD.

THE Pilgrims of Chaucer's time, who started from their old inn in Southwark to have their several aches and ailments healed at the shrine of St. Thomas in Canterbury, little knew how far they would journey in time. The transfiguring power of poetry, which of old raised earthly heroes into constellations, has set them among the galaxies of Westminster Abbey, where, from their beautiful window, they look down upon our generation to remind it that the faith of one age is happy if it can become the artistic decoration of the ages that follow. What the faded picture on board still preserved over the door of the old house standing where the Tabard stood—on which one could some years ago detect a horse's and, it may be, a pilgrim's head—is to the memorial window erected by the Dean of Westminster, so is the faith of those who sought the shrine of St. Thomas to that of the preacher in whom the ancient Abbey climbs to its last century-blossom. Sitting in the light of that glass, passionate with saintly forms, I listened to the far-reaching words of the preacher. They were alive with the pulses of the present. "Were a man to imitate with literal exactness the personal life of Christ, he would be living an essentially unchristian life. We must minister to the exigencies and needs of our own time in the spirit which animated Christ in his dealings with his time." "When Jesus was on earth, he said to his disciples, 'Ye believe in God, believe also in me;' were he now living, he would probably have to say, 'Ye believe in me, believe also in God.'" From his shining exaltation Chaucer responded, "Truth shall thee deliver, 'tis no drede." But the responses of those who sat in the seats, so far as their faces expressed them, seemed very different. Sitting with their Prayer-books before them, with dull formality, the majority of them were evidently listening to the preacher's surplice. In the dim light of the Abbey his words took the shapes of the tombs and arches; and if he had declared himself an atheist,—in his ingenious way,—I verily believe it could have startled few, but must have entered the ears of those about him as a devout expression of faith. For the present the Prayer-book, and the traditions with which he is invested, are too strong for him. Even the light of a burning diamond is lost if set under a bushel. May his golden candlestick be removed into its place, where the eyes that long for it may rejoice in its light!

In the tap-room of the Tabard there was a collection of working people eating their noon-day meal of cheese or sausages and drinking beer. There were eight or ten men and three or four women, to whose conversation I listened, as I awaited the leisure of the publican to take me through the more ancient inn near by. They were discussing the existence of God. I took my notes carefully, and they are as follows:—

A.—"I don't say there be no God; I only say I don't see any signs of him. Look at the vice and misery in Lunnun. I think, if you or I was omniscient and omnipotent, we'd soon manage to put a stop to some things going on in Lunnun."

B.—"But wat do you 'n' I know about Lunnun, and wat's good for it? It's like people praying about the weather; one wants rain, t'other shine: one man's meat's another man's pizen."

A.—"Yes, that may be so about the misery,—we mayn't know what's good for people; but we *do* know that murder an' thievery an' all that ain't good fur nobody. Ef God made the world, seems as ef he put as much bad as good into it."

C.—"But God made man a free agent, and so he had to let him be bad if he liked."

A.—"Yes; but ef he's all-knowin', he must 'ave known when he sent a man into the world whether the man was a-goin' to commit murder; and ef he sent him here knowin' that, whose fault is it?"

D.—"All that's what we don't none of us know nothin' at all about."

A.—"That's just what I say. So, when a feller tells me about God, I say he's tellin' me what he knows nothin' about."

E.—"Well, I'll tell you what I think. So long as a man is well 'n' 'earty, he may go on thinking what he pleases about God, or no God. But what does he say when he's brought down on his back, groanin' with pain? Says he, 'Lord, have mercy upon me!'"

F.—"Yes, he may say so as often as he pleases, but he'll go on groanin' jest the same, unlest the doctor can do somethin' fur 'im. A good many people have said, 'Lord, have mercy!' but they 'n' their child'n go on a-dyin' all the same."

The last speaker was an aged white-haired man, and his eyes twinkled like steel. His hard saying was followed by an ominous silence. He had dropped his seed into a soil too congenial, made up as it was of weary struggles with poverty and pain, not to give it root. Since the days when Chaucer's Pilgrims went to Canterbury to have their ailments healed by touching shrines, how many tears have flowed unheeded, how many sighs received no pity, how many prayers remained unanswered! A long pilgrimage it has been from St. Thomas's shrine to the desolate denials mingling with the beer and sausages of the Tabard of to-day. In how many lowly rooms—for it is no fancy sketch I have given—are such conversations going on?—one, it may be safely affirmed, for every pulpit which instructs the poor amid their sorrows to believe that there is a God who may and can relieve those sorrows if they shall pray to him sufficiently. Many aching bones must have returned from idle pilgrimages to Canterbury ere an English king could have carted its shrines to their dust-holes; and if other invisible shrines are disappearing from the faith of the people, it is because every dogma concerning them is proved false by millions of lives each day. Our Churches are busy sowing Atheism.

Could I be mistaken in thinking that this was the audience, rather than that in the Abbey, to which the preacher I heard there was really commissioned? They sat there in gloom, the chill of scepticism upon them, awaiting him. He did not come. Must they, then, go out again to their work and their dismal lot, unsunned by any higher faith or hope? At this moment one who had remained in a corner silent, and cloaked, advanced and spoke:—

"Had I been an atheist when I entered this room, my brothers, I have heard enough to prove to me the existence of God, and that chiefly from those who have doubted or denied that existence—as they may suppose; for what they have denied is not God, but certain fancies concerning him, each, no doubt, of some value in its day, set up by men, and made into idols by their followers. When Montalembert accused Proudhon of atheism, the latter justly replied, 'If not to believe in M. Montalembert's god constitute an atheist, I am one.' And thus it is when the Churches have brought before you a god as the Supreme Mechanic who created a Universe which there is no reason to suppose was ever created; or a god who rules men with an eternal hell for threat, and a rose-water heaven for reward; or a god who wishes to be flattered by glorifications; or a god who can be induced to suspend the laws of nature, and raise the dead, or save you from disease and poverty;—your rejection of such deities is a rejection of human speculations only. But is there nothing in your very rejection of these idols of dogma which suggests a true God? You reject them, I conceive, because they come in collision with your common sense and your common feeling; that is, you have within you a standard which such gods do not come up to,—an ideal they shock. No father or mother here would treat a child as God is said to treat men and women—loading them with sorrow, surrounding them with evil and temptation, and punishing the millions for their inevitable sins (not to speak of sins they never committed) with interminable and purposeless tortures. But thus you testify to certain great elements in this Universe which cannot be left out of this question. What about this mother's heart? Whence comes it? Millions on millions of mothers are at this moment wearing out their lives for their children. This love is the same in every one of them. Might we not safely say that there is a great mother-principle, an element of love, pervading this Universe?

"Again: I speak to you, and you understand me, because I appeal to something in you which is also in me—call it our common sense or our common reason, which you will; it means that thought is the same in us all. All men in the world who are not idiots will see together that two and two make four; and every thing that can be equally proved will command the assent of all intelligences. May we not, then, add to the love-principle in the Universe a thought-principle also?

"Now, you may feel a difficulty here. Admitting that there is a love and a law of reason common to mankind, what evidence is there that either exists outside of men and women? Maternal love may be the sum-total of the hearts of mothers, and universal reason the sum of human thoughts.

"To this I answer, that everything else about us refers to a larger quantity of the same outside of us. The body of man is an epitome of the world he lives in. Is there limestone in our bones? —there are great strata of the same in the earth. Is there iron in the blood?—it stretches through the planet,—nay, as we are beginning to see, through many planets. It is the same with all the chemic elements of which we are composed. They are not exhausted by the sum of animal forms, but are universal constituents. But if feeling and reason are as definitely parts of us as bone and blood, why should we not equally conclude that these are referable to vast outlying elements of the same pervading the Universe?

"In this world, organs and their functions everywhere report and represent the elements surrounding them. The fin implies water; the wing implies air; find an eye,—there must be light. Fathom with a microscope the vast depths of a rain-drop, and you shall find every zoophyte in the little globe environed by just the elements which are needed for its day of life. Each organ corresponds with an outer law, as hook to eye. When we rise in the scale of form until we come to the higher elements of human nature, shall we conclude that for the first time this harmony is broken —that here is an intellectual eye, but no light; here a spiritual ear, but no sound to reply to it?

"The Supreme Reason is not what we make it: it makes us what it will. The discoverer does not find in the heavens or the earth the reflection of his own notions; he finds there intelligent laws, which set aside and reverse the crude theories of men; and like Kepler he cries, 'Great God, I think thy thoughts after thee!' Not all the suffrages of mankind could make the three angles of a triangle equal to three right angles. Your own scepticisms show that the facts of the human heart and brain cannot be dogmatised down. Not any more can they be scoffed down. Voltaire said: 'Whether or not God made man in his own image, it is very certain man has made God in *his* image.' It is even so: from my feeble thought I trace the Universal Thought; listening to my best heart, I hear the beat of an Infinite Heart.

"But when I go beyond this, and try to explain how these invisible elements are related to the external world, or how they consist with the discords and evils of society, I am warned that I have not yet learned the relation of my thought or feeling to my own body. We have not yet learned the alphabet of that science whose last problem so many parsons are ready to explain with glibness. Poor William Blake once declared that on walking down a lane he had touched the sky with his stick. Our churches and chapels are full of preachers who have evidently done the same to *their* sky. Omniscience is the commonplace attribute of barbarous religions. But the age of Thought is reticent, and, when pressed to speak, asks with Confucius, 'Do heaven and earth speak?' Man has been defined as the talking animal; but rather he is the being who in great emergencies can, like the sheep before his shearers, be dumb; and who, amid the squeak and chatter concerning the unknowable, opens not his mouth.

"Yet will I not admit that my truth is unproductive. It is something that above and through the darkness a tender eye is watching, akin to yours, friend, as you look on those you love. Your child may be even beyond your power to help; still, it is something that you sit there with soothing hand and loving voice. And if this be sustaining amid the grief and evil of our lives, it is a yet more positive and practical good that our minds and hearts may find traced in themselves the presence of the great laws around them by which they may work to sure success. It is the blending of some faculty with a universal power which insures every real result. There must be a vital principle in the individual, or the greatest power without will be unavailing: the same light which will lead a seed to its flower will shine on the rock and leave it still a rock after a thousand years. On the other hand, without the light, the seed will remain a seed for a thousand years. Man must bring his private power into coöperation with the great laws, or his work will be inadequate. What is the human hand, with all its cunning, compared with the same hand wedded to the laws of steam or electricity?

"There is a law in every heart in the Universe responsive to the benevolence of a human being. There is an order in every atom, every planet, related to the constitution of the human mind. Each individual task has a public end, and it is environed by laws and forces by whose aid alone it can be accomplished. To each man that work is worship, that end his only attainable deity. By it he is uplifted; it must represent to him the strength, the beauty, and the joy of God. Loving that, he will love God. If he obey the supreme law of his own being, it matters not whether he define himself as atheist or theist. Other gods are the gods of the dead—of John, Paul, Chrysostom, Calvin; this is the God of the living. We cannot live on the bread that was sown and harvested in ancient Greece or Palestine. Nature still blooms with the unfailing power that gives corn and wine to every creature.

"And it is because of this that Humility is the root of all virtues. A man may have many faults, and yet do well; but if he have no humility he can never rise to the height of his own ideal—nay, his ideal will fade out. How great is that darkness! Self-assertion, egotism, conceit, pride,—these are the deadly enemies of the true and faithful life; and this because they prevent a man seeing that his excellence is not in his individual will, but in the great principles without which he is nothing. Remove man from the great moral forces,—truth, justice, love, knowledge,—and there is not a bird feeding its young but is a nobler object than he.

His nobility above all things is that for him there is a door opening on the divine currents: he enters it a beggar; he stands there a prince. But what is a man whose aim is self-centred?—a candle never touched with light, a stone never fitted in any wall, but left in the path as a danger. Humility is the condition of strength because it combats the weakness of eccentricity and isolation, and raises man to the circle of unfailing forces. He will hold all he has subordinate to the great aim. In this lowliness is born the transfigured self-esteem, or self-reverence, and self-reliance. It is necessary that a man should reverence the constitution of his own mind, because of its relations to the supreme laws of which it is an organ. Self-surrendered, he is victorious; serving, he rules; making himself dust, he will reach the forces by which the dust climbs to a soul in flower or crystal.

"Now, farewell, my brothers and my sisters. May you each know that the highest point of heaven is just above you; that the ladder reaching to it rises from your lot, however little; that there is no motto more royal than 'I SERVE!'"

I had already detected in this speaker my old friend the Interpreter. When he had finished, the sceptic said: "Friend, will you take a mug of beer with me?" The beer was wretched, but the Interpreter told me he would not have exchanged it for finest wine.

XIV.

THE DOCTRINE OF TRUST.

O Creator of the essence of supports and stays,
O thou who showerest down benefits,
O thou who formest the heart and the Soul,
O Fashioner of forms and shadows!
The Soul is a flame from among the flames of the fire of thy residence of sovereignty!
Yezdan is hid by excess of light.
He causeth the shadow to fall;
The Inflamer, who maketh the blood to boil.
Thy world of forms, the city of bodies, the place of earthly things, is long and broad and deep.
Thou art the Accomplisher of Desires.
The eyes of purity saw thee by the lustre of thy substance:
Dark and astounded is he who hath seen thee by the efforts of the Intellect.

THE PERSIAN LITANY.

Lift up your heart upon the knees of God;
Losing yourself, your smallness and your darkness,
In his great light who fills and moves the world,
Who hath alone the quiet of perfect motion.

STERLING.

THE DOCTRINE OF TRUST.

I WENT to the banquet of the Literary Fund, and listened to the speeches of the eminent men gathered there. Of them all I remember one sentence. A man of science, alluding to the charge urged against science that it was cold, said: "Though she freeze me, yet will I trust in her." Such was the echo in the nineteenth century of the faith of Job. More lately we have heard the reply of the Church to the man of science. A Dean, who once signalised himself by denouncing Shakespeare as a godless play-actor, has further adorned his ministry with an anathema on science. He declares the men of science to be worse than idolaters; and accuses them of bringing down out of the sky, and digging up out of the earth, "evidences against God." Fancying, no doubt, that he is trusting God when he rejects the records of Nature, the Dean thanks God he is not like the scientific blasphemers, who prefer to believe the facts of earth and sky rather than the speculations concerning them of a Jew who lived in the infancy of human knowledge. It did not occur to him to inquire why God had stored up evidences against himself in his worlds. He would probably be amazed and indignant if any one should maintain that he who worships a God who has said one thing by Moses and the opposite by Nature is really the idolater,—the worshipper of an impossible monster. All the Deans in England cannot make a disbelief in the laws by which we are surrounded anything but a disbelief in God himself. All the sentimentalists cannot make a fear of the effects of following the truth of Science, whithersoever it may lead, other than a distrust of the wisdom organised in Nature. Unbelief is none the less hollow because masked in respect for some ancient book, nor superstition less heartless because disguised as religious sentiment. The man who really believes follows that which he believes, fearless of consequences. The champions of Liberty said, "Though it cost our lives, yet will we stand by Liberty,"—and so we are free men this day. The Reformer said, "Though we die, we will proclaim the Truth,"—and the prison of the soul lies in fragments around us. The man of Science—the truest successor of the apostles discoverable in our time—cries: "Though knowledge destroy every temple; though it shatter my own and my neighbours' creed; though it bring on me the anathemas of Deans; though it isolate me, freeze me,—yet, because it is knowledge, because it is truth and no lie, I will trust in it." And because it has laboured in this spirit, Science has unrolled before this age a new heaven and a new earth; it has gained some secret from every smallest grass-blade and insect; it has carried the light of every star beyond the eye down to the deeper eye of intelligent admiration; it has kindled the heart and brain of this generation till they illumine as torches a Universe once darkened with the shadows of superstition and fear. But for the high trustfulness of such, there would be no faith left in the earth.

Nothing is more winning in childhood than its trustfulness. Nature has provided that, for many years after we are born into this world, everything about us shall train in us a spirit of trustfulness toward those around us. The babe must cling to its mother without misgiving that her breast will cease to nourish and protect it. The growing child has accumulated, by long experience of the tenderness watching over it, a fund of confidence on which the parents may draw. The love may be manifested in disappointment, but the gathering tear cannot blind the upward look of filial trust. And where a child has been so unhappily trained that its faith can only live by indulgence, we feel that the chief beauty of childhood has vanished. It would seem that the Eternal Love has provided that mankind shall pass through the age of helplessness, in which it must trust others for every good, in order that this habit of confidence may be engendered; so that when in after years the parental providence has been withdrawn, and man must trust his own arm for earthly good, he may the more readily feel after and find the pervading principle of which parental love is the highest earthly manifestation. The history of the race is a steadfast advance toward the conception of a parental Deity.

The theological representation of this spirit of trust is its deformity. It is as if a child should make the father's care a reason for recklessness. It is the fatalism of Egypt, which permits the birds to prey on the corn, the beasts on the people, and filth to accumulate, in deference to the will of Allah. Our missionaries do but carry the ruins of Christ's faith to the ruins of Mohammed's.

The healthy development of this spirit is that which would say to the people: "To trust God is to trust the laws of his universe; it is to trust your own faculties, and the laws of cause and effect. You are distrusting him when you accept as his providence that which you have power to control. The only way to pray for a thing is to work for it in accordance with the conditions under which that thing is to be attained. Anything else, whatever Cant may teach, is the moral indolence which expects some god to do your work."

In the inner world, we are told, we must let the hearts and minds of dead Jews declare the creed of the Nineteenth Century. The Dean clearly cannot see why this age has been given a brain of its own at all. "Leave off your investigations," he says to the man of science; "Moses has settled these things long ago. You must not trust Reason, but God." But this is as if a young man were invited to trust Luck instead of Work. The very essence of faith is corrupted when a man can be induced to abnegate the task of his faculties, and yield his thinking and feeling to be done by others. The true doctrine of Trust is of endless application.

Lately, a band of men were gathered together at Lausanne, in Switzerland, to consult and contrive that all the nations of Europe might be made into a fraternity of peaceful powers, its swords beaten into ploughshares, its spears into pruning-hooks, its fruitful lands converted into a fair Garden of Humanity, where all should be prosperous and all enlightened. The utterances of this group of poets and dreamers were received in the outer world with mingled pity and mirth. To reach Lausanne, they had to pass frontiers bristling with bayonets. They had brought their rose-mist under the shadows of fortresses. Around them stood empires armed to the teeth, glaring upon each other. Some of them were exiles forced to cherish their Utopias in far-off islands. Around them were selfish rulers, aided by servile agents, sustained by ignorant populations. Why should not the world smile to see them fanning their little ember amid these icebergs, which they proposed to melt into a peaceful sea of universal brotherhood?

They were engaged in something a little more obviously, but not more really, absurd than that which is employing every reformer or idealist. The League for the education of every English child in undenominational schools; the Secularists trying to convince every human being that his or her energies belong to an actual, rather than a possible, world; the Socialist who would secure to each the just wage of his work; the champion of woman who demands that her right shall be respected, and that our politics shall be refined by her moral genius; the Liberal believer who would raise mankind to the worship of what is worthy,—all these are bringing their several sparks to melt vast and icy institutions which represent a winter in the whole sky of humanity. What do the kings of the earth care for Victor Hugo's prophecies of the good time coming, when they feel the congenial atmosphere of the season which, were they unmade, would remake them, filling the sky?

But yet, again, why is it that the dreamers go on with their manifestly absurd efforts? Why do the reformers, the freethinkers, go on working unweariedly upon the never-yielding world, besieging the fortresses of wrong with arrows powerless as sunbeams?

These are the children of Trust. These endure, seeing the invisible, toiling on to the city that hath foundations!

The farmer sows his seed in full faith that the seasons, the dews, the sunshine, will lead them to their harvest. He is not dismayed when, after his seed-time, snow and ice cover the earth: he has reasons for seeing beyond snow and ice. He has known many seeds kept safe under all storms,—nay, nourished by them,—to wave in triumph at last. And these tillers of a more sacred soil know well that the law of their seed of truth is also the law of that larger seed, the great world. They will trust the relationships of the universe against all appearances of hostility between this and that. They will still believe that the world is secretly conspiring with the right, and that when emperors are dead and temples decayed the old hunger of mankind for justice and truth will work on, and the rays and rains never fail which shall at last lead every living germ to its flower. So, above the laughter of the world, I listen to the Æolian strain of faith which lingers in the earth, bringing the melodies of hearts that stood firm to their work through the watches of the long night,—the old music, to which atoms march and worlds move,—and know well that its old power is not exhausted. With it is a subtle summer breath, not to be felt by tyrants, transfusing the frozen air. Dream on, O brothers of Lausanne! no wind blows, but whispers your truth; no sunbeam falls, but reveals it to some eye; the ebbing, flowing tides follow it with fluid steps, and the star's in their courses.

To realms more difficult and shadowy the spirit of Trust attends her child, even where the human spirit rises with trembling wing to the last verge of time, and, looking down the dim vista beyond the grave, questions—Whither? We have arrived at an age which no longer can, even if it would, trust its sacred treasures of hope to the frail and flimsy vessels of tradition. To Thought there can be no authority but Reason. The world has long trusted the determined assertions of immortality so completely, that now, when those assertions are questioned, it turns out that the human mind has no single clear proof of a future existence. Socrates gives plausible speculations; Modern Philosophy feeds itself with a few probabilities; while Science shows the problem still standing, a Sphynx with sealed lips, just beyond the reach of the human faculties. But if deep in our own thought and love we have caught the lineaments of a Supreme Reason; if, whatever mystery surround the relation of that central Intelligence to a world apparently unconquered by it, we still see in history the steadfast triumph of moral over brute forces, and armies vanquished by ideas,—we have found a truth on which man may pillow his head in the darkness. It shall not be different—this law—whether it affect a soul or a world. Why should I be anxious concerning the voyage or the distant shore, if Wisdom hold the helm, and the breath of Love fill the sail? Shall I realise elsewhere the ideals earth has failed to fulfil? Shall I clasp again the kindred hearts parted from me by death? I know not. This I know, that the Inspirer of affections, the Source of unattained ideals, lives.

Some of us have already lived long enough to prefer annihilation to that eternal Sabbath, passed in full sight of the agonies of the damned, which once seemed to us the *summum pulchrum* of immortality: it may be that we should in a proportionately advanced phase of insight equally abhor anything we can now conceive as individual immortality, which already one philosopher discovers means, as commonly taught, the wearing out of one's old boots in some other world. At any rate, 'tis as vain to vex our lives with anxieties concerning the unknowable, as it were to refuse the food of our own zone because it is not the tropical luxury mentioned in some traveller's book.

Confucius said: "The divine spirit which the superior man cherishes flows on in equal extent with heaven and earth." Trained by the faith in the working of good, even where evil seems to reign; observant of the fires revealed by night, and the growths fed by decays; living for the idea which is everywhere resisted, but steadily triumphant,—the man of trust will at least know that this Universe is nowhere under the direction of Chance or of any Devil; and if he doubt the common belief concerning the future, it will be in the hope of something transcending it.

XV.

ONE VOICE.

The peculiar nature of the Scholar's occupation consists in this: that science, and especially that side of it from which he conceives of the whole, shall continually burst forth before him in new and fairer forms. Let this fresh spiritual youth never grow old within him; let no form become rigid and fixed; let each sunrise bring him new joy and love in his vocation, and larger views of its significance.

FICHTE.

Through, brothers, through,—this be
Our watchword in danger or sorrow:
Common clay to its mother dust,
All nobleness heavenward!

KÖRNER.

ONE VOICE.

I FOLLOWED the great revolutionary thinker of our time to hear him deliver his address as Lord Rector of the chief Scottish University. On that notable morning I saw this severest critic of the people pursued with plaudits along the street. The students rose with wild enthusiasm to welcome the opponent of all they were accustomed to hear from their professors and their parents. He stood there, the chief of all, a portent of these times. Honoured he was, because his path had been marked by no mean compliance with the world,—a path as unsullied as any that had been trod by the shades of the great and faithful which we saw standing by his side. But his presence was significant of even more than the profound rectitude of the yet unwarped youth who, touched with a fine enthusiasm, had called him there.

Amid the confused landmarks of the present time, the young are asking with increasing concern, "What shall we do?" The deluge of inquiry has floated the old institutions; many of them are going to pieces, others sinking waterlogged. Life has outrun the ancient guides; libraries have become fossil thoughts; and we have reached a condition somewhat like that which originated our old universities, where students gathered to hear what had not yet been embodied in books or institutions. There is a perception abroad that our living waters have left the old channels, and are beginning to cut new ones for themselves. And among those engaged on the new channels the young men had fixed on one of the sincerest, and called on him to stand here and justify his work.

That day I did not envy Palestine or Arabia their prophets, nor Germany her reformers; all preceding dawns glowed on this face, all their burdens were on this voice, as, with the eloquence of perfect conviction, he uttered once more that which had been the soul of all his teachings. One simple line he has added to the creed of youth. Where to the old question, "Who made you?" the child answers, "God;" this man cries, "O child, if God made thee, he meant thee!" Again, he insisted that each human being enters this world for an assigned task; that wisdom consists in discovering it, religion in accomplishing it. All reading, all teaching, must be determined by the mental hunger rising from it; all worship is humility before it, all joy is to be found at the core of it, all sorrow attaches to the infidelity which abandons that.

But is this true? Does each of the swarming millions around us represent some divine thought? It is a hard saying. So many seem missent or accidentally sent into this over-populated society of ours! We have discovered how to make our chimneys consume their smoke; we can turn our garbage to golden grain; but we still go on carting men to the gallows or the colonies quite helplessly. Yet now and then from their dumb ranks some voice comes telling us of a beauty hidden beneath their hard animalism, as when Ebenezer Elliott's tears hiss upon his anvil, and his hammer beats out:—

> Flowers of thy heart, O God, are they,—
> Cast thou not them as weeds away,
> Their heritage a winter's day:
> God save the People!

Flowers! What pains have gone into the architecture of the humblest daisy! And is not each humble man of more value than many daisies? Are we, in not finding a high use for each human being,—in whom dwells a life that defies explanation,—prone to confuse our ignorance with the wisdom in Nature, which has done nothing by redundance, inscribing its sign for the intelligent as surely on the wing of a fly as on that of an archangel?

There is a mystical meaning in that word by which each man names his vocation; it is his *calling.* Something has, then, called to him. Something significant, too, there is in each man's sensitiveness concerning his calling. The physician is not annoyed when told he cannot build a ship; but the wound is deep if he is charged with incompetence in his own profession. Then there come to us the old monitions of the great: Be thyself; Know thyself; Look into thy heart, and write; with Chaucer's dying word—

Rede well thyself, that other folk canst rede.

We know, too,—the humblest know,—the up-hill work of doing what is against the grain of us, and the lightness of the labour we love. We know how vain it is to try and keep Burns a ploughboy—how vain to make poets of those who ought to be ploughboys, and whose wooden shoes may be heard clattering through all their rhymes. Saul will hardly make your herdsman, nor Jesus your carpenter; Cimabue is but a poor shepherd, and Newton a mere bungler as haberdasher; George Fox and Böhme are not the men you would bid stick to their last. It is not arbitrary reversible power we are under, but unalterable laws; and so long as there is no life, however obscure, without its ideal, we must heed the man there who has lived the word he utters, and believe, indeed, that for each there is an appealing task, with which each must rise or fall, commissioned to bind or loose on earth that which shall in every world be so bound or loosed.

In a church in Venice I saw a representation in marble of Jesus at the moment when he cried in the synagogue, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me." He had been put forward by the priest to do one thing—he did quite another and an unexpected thing. The artist had put into the young man's face a radiance and joy beyond what I had conceived stone could express. The hair floats back, the eye dilates, the face, as it were, blooms under the light that has fallen upon it in that moment of turning from the prescribed path to the true path. He has thrown off the shackles of the synagogue, and, clearing the altar like a winged god, appeals from the plan of parent and priest to the verdict of his own spirit.

It may be the legends did not comprehend their own significance when they gave as that youth's first words, "I must be about my Father's business;" and as his last, "It is finished." Between the work undertaken and the work finished there lay wildernesses of temptation, gardens of agony, scourgings and thorn-crowns, but there lay no faltering of the faithful steps. No visions of tasks declined, no ideals turned by neglect to fierce fallen angels, haunted that supreme moment, but only the clear response: "Thou hast overcome; thou hast realised thy soul; thy Father's business with thee on earth is finished."

XVI.

CROSS ROADS.

O gracious Pan, and ye other gods who preside over this place! grant that I may be beautiful within, and that those external things which I have may be such as agree with a right internal disposition of mind, and that I may account him to be rich who is wise and just.

SOCRATES.

If a man lose his fowls or his dog, he knows how to seek them. There are those who lose their hearts, and know not how to seek them. The duty of the student is no other than to seek his heart. He who employs his whole mind will know his nature. He who knows his nature knows Heaven.

MENCIUS.

One who, if he be called upon to face
Some awful moment, to which Heaven has joined
Great issues, good or bad for human kind,
Is happy as a lover, and attired
With sudden brightness, like a man inspired;
And through the heat of conflict keeps the law
In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw.

WORDSWORTH.

CROSS ROADS.

I WALKED amid the ancient ruins at St. Andrew's, seeking to spell out from the stones the storms that shaped them, from the walls and towers the ages they represent; and the bracing winds from over the sea seemed like the strong pure voices of the great out of the past, as they might be refined from all that was hard and crude, raised into harmony with truths which waves and winds repeat. Ah, this sweet benediction of death! this filtration by time of the transient from the permanent, so that the true man surely finds his place in the great brotherhood of souls not to be parted by climes or ages, or the opinions belonging to them! There is no difference: whether it be Voltaire or John Knox, the voices of the great at last accord in the chant which goes on from age to age, while the temples wherein they worshipped, or which they assailed, crumble into common ruin. It was the spirit of John Knox which summoned lately the foremost political thinker of

England, and afterwards the historian of the age of Elizabeth, to represent St. Andrew's University and advise its youth. Without these, the brave old warriors of independent thought could not be made perfect.

The earnest men thus summoned felt the full gravity of the opportunity afforded them. A common instinct guided both to address themselves to the unwritten chapter of Moral Science,—to the Ethics of Intellect. The advance of popular education amid new modes of thought and expression makes the theme one of increasing urgency; and the scholar in the vanguard already finds himself steering perilously between the Scylla of falseness to his insight and the Charybdis of defiance toward others, fraught with affliction to those whom he would only love and bless. Many a firm spirit, with wing eager to flutter out of the open cage-door, is asking at this moment, "Must I sacrifice everything to this new abstract belief of mine? Shall I forget business relations, bruise friendships, grieve those nearest and dearest, overshadow the social prospects of my children, by openly identifying myself with the despised and rejected truth? or may I not silently cherish my higher faith under apparent conformity?"

These are not easy questions to answer. Few things are so sacred as our personal relations. It seems hard that any duty should require us to shatter the unity of our homes. And, as a matter of fact, it cannot be doubted that vast numbers are worshipping at altars inwardly abjured, because the sword of their spirit, though strong enough to carve through iron, is not fine enough to divide the yielding veil of personal affection; and this all the more because the Church, more anxious for outward than for inward allegiance, hastens to mitigate its creed privately for every clever youth, and speaks with double tongue.

The Pilgrim hastened to listen to what the two eminent and liberated thinkers would say to the young men of St. Andrew's on this great issue; but, alas, instead of being furthered on his journey, he found himself left without any clear sign-post at cross roads. What a symptom it is of the chaotic condition of thought in this transitional era, that two mature and accomplished scholars should, on such an occasion, solemnly call young men to contrary paths! Regarding the same shore, one cries, Sail North! the other, Sail South! In the presence of these youths—of orthodox training, many of them looking to the ministry—both of the University Rectors referred to assumed that it is impossible for an educated mind to believe the doctrines of the reigning Churches. The question was there before them, What were those youths to do? Were they to remain in the Church and slily undermine its doctrine? Were they to disappoint parent and

Church, and openly war upon the dogmas counting on their support?

For once it seemed to be the voice of Erasmus, rather than that of John Knox, speaking through those honoured lips—ever strong upon the weaker side—which said, "Let all who conscientiously can remain in the Church, whether their interpretations of its doctrines be the usual ones or not. Be careful not to leave the national provisions for religious teaching and worship in the hands of bigots. A Church is far more easily improved from within than from without."

Hardly half-battles, either, were the words of the historian, though their thrust was deeper. "Those who are in possession of the field are bidding high for the intellect which is becoming alienated. Radicalism must be reverent, but it must be self-truthful. Be honest with yourselves, whatever the temptation; tamper not with your own minds; the Evil Spirit HUMBUG is abroad. But remember that all long-established formulas once held living truths, which must be respected; that, after all, you of the advanced views may be wrong; that others have the same right as you to their opinions; that truth's destiny does not depend upon you; and that the social courtesy which forbids us to say in private what would give pain to others, forbids us equally in public to obtrude opinions which offend those who do not share them."

Listening to both of these voices the Pilgrim thanks Heaven that heroes sometimes live lives that can outweigh their occasional nods!

It may be, indeed, that if every young listener at St. Andrew's were in the habit of weighing words, he might detect in the language of the Rector for 1867, not advice for free men, but advice to prisoners, how they may make the best of their hard lot. It is the tendency of the advice, as given to youths who need not be prisoners, which seems to look downward. Stay inside if you possibly can, it says: if by unusual interpretations, by hook or by crook, you can hold on to the Establishment without being actually expelled by force, do so, for the advantages of being there are very great. Is this an encouragement to frankness, simplicity, straightforwardness, or to the casuistic habit of mind? Is it trusting in truth, or in truth's opposite, *prestige?* Advantages in this world continue to demand their price, and whether it be better that our young men should turn themselves into intellectual *prestidigitateurs* to secure power in the Establishment, or whether they should pay every opportunity it offers to be men

Whose armour is their honest thought,
And simple truth their only skill,

is a question on which the Pilgrim appeals from the Rector of St. Andrew's to the man who paid a seat in Parliament to defend the political equality of an Atheist.

If thinkers abandon the Church, the national provision for religious instruction will indeed be monopolised by the stupid; but if, as the theory in question assumes, the Church represent falsities to the masses, does not he who remains in it sanction those falsities? Three-fourths of his weight must inevitably go in favour of the interpretation it bears to the aggregate mind, whatever reservations be in his own mind, or even in his speech. We do, indeed, all sustain institutions mingled with error, but, if faithful, only those wherein truth and utility are preponderant, and the error plainly and professedly unconstitutional; but where a thing is preponderantly hurtful, and its organic law false,—where for every true utterance it proclaims a thousand superstitions,—shall we not say that the one way for that institution is that it shall be utterly relegated to meanness and stupidity? When the brains are out, it will die. It is the deep game of injustice and error to bribe with promises of opportunity for good the piety and wit which alone can renew their lease of life. What will not the usurper in France give for the adhesion of the literary men in his projects of oppression?

Unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united! Let the true life of the age ebb away from every strand of wrong, leaving there the hulks to rot; let it beat with full tide to the shores where wait the ships for whose voyage hearts are pining, to float which is to bear the freight of truth to spirits that hunger, straining their eyes to the horizon throughout the earth! He is happy who has attained a society of kindred minds, and every such environment is to the individual mind as a fortress beneath his tower of vision. But let him have other aims than that for which his stronghold was raised, and it becomes his prison. When faces cease to become physiognomical, they become masks. Every teacher who stands before the community with an expression of forms and articles which are not the real features into which his spirit would freely organise itself, wears a mask through which every tone from behind will be changed, every look perverted, and the people will hear what they came to hear, whatever be said. What power is wasted thus from age to age! One of Plato's disciples, anticipating Munchausen, compared his master's thoughts to words frozen in the air as soon as uttered, to be heard long after when thawed out by a warmer season, as voices falling out of the air upon astonished travellers. The conceit may well suggest the great truths which, amid the mass of ritual and error, must have been uttered in the temples of many lands, by advanced souls trying to express themselves through the old forms and phrases. Every such thought is frozen in the icy death around it, there to remain till some reformer brings a spring-tide, expressing itself in its own leaf and flower, when the age that least needs them hears on the summer air the plaintive prophecies and far-reaching sentences which were withheld from those who first heard or read them because not bravely separated from contemporary superstitions. Undoubtedly there are some vigorous voices heard beyond their cloisters; but they only remind us what we are losing, for their strength is divided, their sense confused. If this age realised the need of a purer mental morality, it would be startled at finding it possible, when a venerable and scholarly clergyman closes a long ministry, for a friendly and faithful listener to represent that in that time the great themes of his ministry have been the "divine character of man as man," and the "belief in a universe of law, and in the progress and development of man as a part of that system of law;" and for another listener, equally friendly and faithful, to represent the same long ministry as devoted to showing that man "has fallen away from God," and "that law and progress without God and Christ are as the godless world of Richter's vision."* So much for the help of those who become part of the Church in order to reform it.

Across this road the historian clears another:

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* See the criticisms in the *Pall Mall Gazette* (November, 1869) on the Rev. F. D. Maurice and his ministry in Vere Street.

whither tends that? By his rule, the young man whose mind has abandoned the old moorings of belief would strictly conform his personal relations with his changed views. He would adhere to no Church or Party which did not represent his private opinions; but he would be reticent in stating those opinions except where they are welcome,—that is, he would advocate them where they required no advocacy; he would not publicly assail the abandoned principles, nor seek to enthrone those he has attained. And the first reason for this course is that it is a primary duty not to offend others, who have as good a right to their opinions as he has to his. So far as this advice would characterise the spirit and style of our advocacy of unpopular convictions, nothing could be wiser. Nearly every opinion may be stated in a gentle or in an offensive way. An Oriental prince asked two interpreters to explain his dream. One said, "You will lose all your relatives, then die yourself." The monarch ordered this prophet of evil to be beheaded. The other said, "Your majesty will survive all your relations." The prince loaded this one with favours, though his interpretation was really the same as that of the other. Thus there are two ways of doing things. The adherent of Truth should not hold her up in a form that shall repel, but in that which shall attract. But to bid him hold his peace about his convictions in deference to those opposed to them would have silenced Jesus before the Pharisees, Paul before the image-makers of Ephesus, and Luther at the Diet of Worms. The young man turns to a pillar of savourless salt on the day he shall follow that strange admonition. Nor does the fact that each dead formula once contained a living spirit warrant its claim to remain as an obstacle in the path of that now required by the living spirit. But, after all, it is said, he of the advanced views may be wrong. Certainly he may be; and until he has pondered that fully, the more silent the better. There is good need that the young lads of St. Andrew's should be reminded of the danger of committing themselves hastily to immature speculations, and also that it is a frivolous mind which thinks it necessary to cover everybody with ill-considered doubts. So long as one has only half-thoughts and unfledged speculations, it were miserable self-conceit to call the attention of the Universe to them. But convictions —the word is from *con* and *vincere*, and refers to things which have finally conquered heart and mind—are more serious; and every noble mind will not merely Orpah-like kiss his mother of conscious Truth, but cleave unto her—following that whithersoever it may lead, sharing its fate, willing to be buried with it.

XVII.

A FÊTE-DIEU AT TROUVILLE.

The roads tending to God are more in number than the breathings of created beings.

SASAN.

Be to the best thou knowest ever true
  Is all the creed.
Then, be thy talisman of rosy hue,
  Or fenced with thorns that, wearing, thou must bleed,
Or gentle pledge of love's prophetic view,
  Thy faithful steps it will securely lead.

MARGARET FULLER.

A FÊTE-DIEU AT TROUVILLE.

WHAT Wordsworth desired—that his days should be linked each to each by natural piety—is fulfilled in the religious life of these simple peasants around the watering-place of Trouville-sur-Mer. A walk along embowered paths brings one to the ancient statue revered by the people as the Virgin of the Forest. Was it originally meant for the Madonna, or for a priestess of the Druids? Was it Mary? was it Velleda? There is no cross nor inscription. It may be that as Ma, Maia, Mary, she has received the veneration of successive generations. Among all the mottoes which surround her now, the majority signify that she is regarded as the tutelary divinity of fishermen and sailors. "To her who saved me from the wreck;" "To her who rescued me in a storm;" "The Star of the Sea,"—such are the tributes to her; the last being frequently repeated. It may have been the Goddess of Beauty, who rose out of the sea-foam, that became thus, through the dangers and storms encountered by her worshippers, consecrated to a deeper meaning than she had for the Romans who brought her hither, and, blended with the loving Madonna, stood forth now as the providential star shining for those who go down to the sea in ships. Ere she became invested with this tenderer light, she may have served to gather about her all the gentler elements of beliefs yet earlier, and softened the wild reign of Odin ere she mitigated the severe sway of Jahve.

Whoever the saint may be whose day returns for celebration among these people, it is always the Virgin who receives their homage. All other forms have waned into dimness beside the light of the Mother whom they ever behold throned in the heavens. Two of the Sundays which I passed at Trouville were devoted to the Fête-Dieu—the ancient festival of the sacrament, instituted by Urban IV. just six hundred years ago, neglected now in the chief Gallican cities. Early in the morning the young men and maidens and the children of the neighbourhood gathered together and formed a procession. The girls were all arrayed in white, and the young men decorated with garlands. The youths bore in their hands leaves of corn and green flags and clover; the children had little baskets filled with rose-leaves. With these all the streets through which the priests bore the sacrament were strewn, and the town soon became carpeted with flowers. Altars were raised at various points in the streets, and the chanting procession went all day from altar to altar, at each of which a Mass was said. There was now and then a reminiscence of the old miracle-plays. A child dressed with a strip of wool about the loins, and bearing a long wooden cross, represented John the Baptist; and, led by the hand of this one, another, dressed in a blue robe and bearing a silver cross, impersonated the infant Jesus. There might be something a trifle grotesque to sophisticated eyes in seeing these sacred infants refreshed now and then, as they were, with gingerbread; but to these simple people the impression was not marred by any such sense of incongruity, and no doubt the children truly represented the facts of the case. A lovely young girl of about eighteen years, who, in addition to her pure white dress, wore a long veil reaching to her feet, represented the Virgin Mary; and as the procession turned from the Mass she bent low, and each child threw a handful of rose-leaves upon her as she passed. Everywhere along the street, and in the church, which all at length entered, there were banners festooned with flowers and inscribed with endearing names to the Virgin—the favourite being, "The Star of the Sea." The Virgin was no dogma to these fishermen, but an ever-watching eye of love above that element upon which and by which they lived.

Not to be disconnected from the cheerful words of the priest, the glad notes of the choir, and the radiance of serene faith and happiness upon all, was this idea of a tender Mother above them all. They were not haunted by any devil, nor overshadowed by the fear of hell. They were undoubting believers in a faith which made them happy, as a faith well might which had replaced the jealous Jahve with a supreme maternal love.

The day after I had witnessed this I saw near a House built in the park of the Great Exposition a set of rigid long-faced men from London distributing tracts to those who passed by. Some of these tracts I accepted and glanced through before tearing them to pieces. They were redolent of brimstone; warned people that they were going to hell; exhorted Catholics to abjure their idolatries, particularly the worship of Mary; and described God as in high wrath, and Christ as one about to descend as minister of divine vengeance. Most of those who passed looked on the colporteurs with the merest curiosity as a part of the show.

Why should people dethrone out of their hearts a supreme loving mother, and raise in her place an angry jealous autocrat? Let any man compare that happy religious festivity at Trouville with the gloomy services of a London Chapel, and say which is preferable. The religion of the Catholic peasant is indeed unenlightened, but is it more so than the incredible creed of "Evangelicals," who bring no evangel, no glad tidings, but only tidings of woe? Who could associate rose-leaves with hell-fires, or wreathe the Torturer of Souls with evergreen? It is inconceivable that any faith can be permanently vanquished by one less attractive than itself.

It may be said that in Germany and England the present hard deity of Protestantism *did* replace the tenderer being adored by Catholic populations. It is true that, along with the sunshine and flowers of the old faith, there came miasmas in the summer air, and reptiles creeping among the flowers, and that in the vigorous wrath which would exterminate these, and flash purifying lightnings through the atmosphere, many beautiful growths were destroyed. The human heart in its indignation was not discriminating; they who bore the cross in their lives would not look upon the shape of it which had become the symbol of corruption, and they would not tolerate the Mother who seemed to have become allied with the Mother of Harlots. So the winter of Puritanism came on. Yet beneath its snow every seed of Faith's old summer was safely kept for the fairer spring-tide. If one would find the reappearance of the floral festivals of Trouville, he must look to New England when Puritanism has had its full outcome. There, in the merry summer festivals of the most liberal or "radical" churches, he will find the same joy blooming beneath the sunny faith which, under Channing, Parker, Emerson, and many another, has flowered out of the storm-burst stem of Puritanism. "Gotama made a new song for the old god." The whole task of the religion which is there the direct heir of Calvinism has been for nearly two generations the breathing of a new life on the fields which its frosts have so long and so necessarily bound, to lead out the blossoms again; and although the Madonna reappears no more on the altars from which she was withdrawn, the love she signified is preserved in the ever-watchful God whom Theodore Parker addressed in his prayers as "our Father and our Mother."

It is an indication of the depth of the imperishable sentiment which gladdens the creed of the Catholic peasant, that from the time when the worship of the Virgin was overthrown by Protestantism her heavenly office was transferred to her holy child, so that the pictures of Jesus came to represent no longer a man, but a man with the long locks and tender aspect of a woman.

The sage and the seer conversed, and the dervise listened. Afterward the sage said, "All that the seer sees, I know." The seer said, "All that the sage knows, I see." But the dervise said, "All that the sage knows, and the seer sees, I feel." The heart has a logic of its own. These peasants are reaching by blind ways, unknown to our colder Anglo-Saxon brains, the happier faith toward which our thinkers are struggling.

'Tis an old theme, my brothers, this Divine Love, and it cannot be exhausted. Men have not outlived it, angels cannot outlearn it. It swayed the ancient world by many a fair god and goddess; its light has been cast over ages of Christian controversy and warfare; it is still the guiding Star of the Sea to each voyager after the nobler faith. The youth leaves the old shore of belief only because love has left it. His starved affections will no longer accept stone, though pulverised flour-like and artfully kneaded, for bread. Their white sails fill the purple and the sombre seas, and they hail each the other to ask for the summer land where faith climbs to beauty, and the lost bowers of childhood's trust may be found again. A prosperous voyage to you, brave brothers!

XVIII.

A VIGIL.

Let the simple soul extend unimpeded its fiery energy. The immortal heart should be the leader; but let all your eyes look upward!

ZOROASTER.

What hath not man sought out and found,
But his dear God? who yet his glorious love
Embosoms in us, mellowing the ground
With showers, with frosts, with love and awe.

GEORGE HERBERT.

A VIGIL.

ON the Vigil of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary I went to listen to the discourse of a good-hearted priest. His argument was, that since, as Protestantism admitted, Jesus could only be free from the taint of our common humanity by a miraculous conception, so was it necessary also that his mother should, in the same manner, have been secured from hereditary sin. It was but a step in consistency, yet it was that. The neighbouring clergyman, who holds this theory in horror, nevertheless preaches it, and helps to build every convent where women are taught that motherhood is impure, every time he declares that human nature is depraved, and that Jesus was born without a human father.

Then I went to a gathering of Men of Science to hear a paper read on the relative nature of the sexes in all parts of the world. Having proved to his own satisfaction that the female sex was everywhere inferior to the male, the author of the paper denounced the efforts now being made for the elevation of women, and asked, "For what end is woman created?" His answer was—"Maternity." Then straightway he proceeded to show that by that word he meant simply the bringing of children into the world. Even if this were all that is implied in the word Mother, one might say that no kind or amount of human knowledge were too much for woman, and that every college should throw open its doors for her. But *is* that all? That woman with the babe in her arms is to bear it again, a man; from her pains and labours a character is to be added to society. Shut out from colleges, she is to educate a soul; excluded from politics, she is to train voters and legislators. Her mother's work shall be felt for good or ill in every nerve of the world, which holds—somewhat uneasily, one is glad to see, in these last days—the end of her existence to be that of a prolific animal.

Against the theories of the priest and the *savant* I weighed the wisdom of a child I knew who could not be induced to say the Lord's Prayer unless she were permitted to insert "Mother" in its first clause. The testimonies of ages were summed in the protest of her spirit: the goddesses beside their gods; the Madonnas of Mexican, Buddhist, Egyptian, and Chinese temples; Aditi, Isis, Ceres, Freyja, Mary,—they all came as Morning Stars to sing their chorus around this child, over whose cradle the kind mother who meant them all had watched till God's eye shone through hers.

An old legend relates that, when Mary fled with the infant Jesus into Egypt, she once entered a temple of Serapis, where all the images of the country's deities were collected. At the moment when she entered, all the statues fell from their niches, and lay shattered on the floor. The worshippers prostrated themselves, and bewailed their ruined idols; but when they presently looked up, they saw in the place of each fallen statue a radiant white-winged angel, and, crowned above them all, Mary with the holy babe in her arms.

Well, the ages passed, and Mary, with her child, hardened into stone. Three hundred years ago, when Tetzel stood at her altar selling every vice, and she, with the saints around her, stood cold and still with no word to utter, a holier mother entered, and the floor was heaped with the fragments of the idols of the Church. It has taken their worshippers long to perceive that in their places arose that day the shining forms of living virtues.

There came a day when, as the boy Martin Luther sang his songs in the street, a true Madonna took him into her home, loved him, taught him. He who had seen the beauty of Ursula's life was not to be deceived by a painted doll superintending the sale of adultery for ducats. That gilded puppet he struck down, and thenceforth the long-imprisoned ideal of a holy womanhood ascended to the heart of God, descended to the life of man, and passed on to lead man to his nobler society. Calvinism was but the chaos of the shattered idols which fell when Virtue entered the Church; but when above that ruin the human heart looked up without fear, and caught the smile of a Father's face in the Heavens, it really worshipped the Madonna. For it is woman who represents the principle of Love in this Universe. To her the great offices of affection are confided, and to her sufferings and tasks its profounder laws and secrets are disclosed.

The father loves also, but because he has been taught by her. Where woman is a slave, the father is a stern patriarch; only as she has gradually gained equality, influence, reverence, has he been able to make his name one of tender association. And as this perpetual Madonna has made the civilised home, she must proceed to civilise the school and the state, and to ennoble human character. We need only contrast the cultured home with our corrupt politics, we need only look from our social intercourse to the snarling of nation with nation, to see where the influence of woman remains to be felt. Where man reverses the fiat of his ancient instinct, and claims that "it is good for man to be alone," there is he barbarous still. But woman "is not fit to be a soldier." That is her credential to lead to the ages of peace. She is inharmonious with every remnant of barbarism, with all that is passing away —with war, with hustings mobs; but how stands she related with the society for which good men are striving?

All suns mean the light by which I walk. The new heaven of ideas opened for this age signifies a new earth also. The Madonna disappearing from her constellation reappears in many warm human forms: first of all, in the ideal of manly character. Every man worthy to be out of prison must now be in good part a woman; and just in the proportion that the masculine nature ascends to the strength which comes of a receptive spirit,—so far, that is, as it is mystically married to the feminine nature,—it is touched to the finer issues of existence. No one can be noble but by noble passions. The manly heart shall be the most virginal. (For the satire which has confined the word *virgin* to one sex shall be perceived when men have learned to exact of their own souls that which they exact of woman!) We know a good woman when we see her: which of her qualities is it would disgrace a man?

Effeminacy!

Behold the great Sisterhood of Saviours: what foreheads shine more fair in the history of those who have raised the earth by noble passions than theirs? The stately Iphigenia finds her nuptial and her glory in dying for her country; Antigone cannot be parted by any power or terror from her brother's corpse; Hypatia will perish with her gods; the Countess Emily Plater, the Maid of Orleans, leap forth as divine lightnings, scorning danger and death. Above all, behold that unmoved figure amid the wild storms on the summit of Calvary! With cruel mockeries the martyr on his cross is buffeted. Where are his disciples? "They all forsook him and fled." He looks around on the glaring eyes, hears the scoffing words, and cries, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Had he looked downward, he would have seen a figure clasping his cross, a face turned with agony to meet his last look, which would have mutely said, "Poor sufferer, thou art not forsaken. A love like thine own hovers near thee." There stood by the cross of Jesus his mother; and as she stands there she is the prophecy of the Madonnas of all noble causes. She forecasts the far-shining year when there shall be manly women and womanly men. Happy they who, by sharing her fortitude and devotion, have realised in their own breasts a picture of her more saintly than artist ever drew or priest adored.

It was for a far-and-wide pilgrimage through the earth that the Madonna abandoned the altars of the Church. She ascended to blend with and soften the wrathful Jehovah into a loving Father; she gave a second birth to Jesus, and from being a severe judge he became the gentle pleader for man; she entered the breast of man, and his strength was mystically married to her finer power, to make ideal character. But not yet were her ministrations ended. With his deeper eye man could now recognise her sacred form moving along the pathways of the earth, could trace her in the soothed brow of sickness, in the ray that lighted the home of toil, in a warmth that lingered about fireless hearth-stones, in steps of light and love radiant amid the selfishness of commerce. He could see the reappearance of good mothers in good men. (Of Auguste Comte many things may be forgotten, but not that he placed his wife and servant-girl in his Calendar of Saints.)

A Roman Catholic priest said, "It was a fearful loss to you Protestants when you gave up our Blessed Mother." To him the Pilgrim replied with this fable. A child found, then lost, a beautiful butterfly. She sought it again with tears. Meanwhile, the butterfly had alighted softly on the child's head, and remained there during the search. Have we, then, lost the Blessed Mother? Some of us have found her at our sides, the Madonna of everyday life, bringing intimations of the Eternal Heart to our firesides, whispering all unconsciously by her fidelity and tenderness, "O human heart, surely thou canst trust the Source of the hearts of good women." One day, as I shall hope, even you, priestly brother, will awake to the perception that, while you have been glorifying the dead Mary with new dogmas, and hurling anathemas on the education and elevation of the living Mary, they who have most of all, as you say, lost the Madonna, are really embodying her soul in a new era of civilisation. Behold, it is the Vigil of the Bridal Day of Man and Woman in the State, and the stars prophesy of the offspring of that great marriage —the reign of Love, and ages of Peace.

XIX.

OLD TEMPLES.

Each age has its own follies, as its majority is made up of foolish young people; its superstitions appear no superstitions to itself. But after a short time down go its folly and weakness, and the memory of them; its virtues alone remain, and its limitation assumes the form of a beautiful superstition, as the dimness of our sight clothes the objects in the horizon with mist and colour. The revelation of reason is this of the unchangeableness of the fact of humanity under all its subjective aspects, that to the cowering it always cowers, to the daring it opens great avenues. The ancients are only venerable to us because distance has destroyed what was trivial; as the sun and stars affect us grandly only because we cannot reach to their smoke and surfaces, and say, Is this all?

EMERSON.

The empty ruins, lapsed again
Into Nature's wide domain,
Sow themselves with seed and grain,
As Day and Night and Day go by,
And hoard June's sun and April's rain.

ALLINGHAM.

OLD TEMPLES.

DURING the last Exposition at Paris I visited the International Chess Tournament. It was a somewhat strange experience to sit in that silent room and witness the solemnity of these champions from various parts of Europe and America grappling with each other in mimic strife, while nations with their great competitions roared around them. They were fine-browed men, too, scholarly in their casual talk, and it was almost grotesque with what intensity of feeling or flushes of despair they hurled pawn against pawn, and knight against knight. Alexander the Great confessed with shame, it is said, his interest in this game; and yet it has survived the interest in his wars.

There is a legend of the origin of Chess, which I have heard, that the warriors in some old evenly-fought never-decided battle were finally transformed into these little figures, that they might continue their struggle to the end of time without disturbing the rest of the world. The fable is not a bad one as concerns other matters. Men have always been pursuing apparently vast things, which seemed to them to have no end of importance, but which Time reduces, until for later generations they become as chess kings and chess bishops. There are men who, indeed, still carry on the game amid the world of real interests, but the masses look on with wonder. Here, for example, at the door of the building where the players sit at their tourney, is a small Hebrew temple, erected by some silly London Society for the Conversion of the Jews, which contains a model of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem and of all the churches that cluster around it. There are temples, convents, shrines, chapels, altars, mosques, representing about fifteen peoples of the earth. The part owned by each is defined by a special colour, and the model—it was made by command of the Viceroy of Egypt—may be taken to pieces, showing you all that is inside and beneath the sacred spot. Here is stratum on stratum,—Coptic, Syrian, Greek, Armenian, Russian, Roman, English, even American. Remove a Greek temple, and under it is a Roman Catholic "Chapel of the Three Crosses;" beneath that, again, some temple burrows to a rock said to have been rent at the crucifixion. While one race claims that it holds the spot where Jesus was buried, another boasts its possession of that where the manger lay; for rivalry has worked the miracle that Jesus should have been born and reared, been tried, scourged, crucified, and buried, all within this little circle of space! As the exhibitor went on with his explanations the smile went round at the little religious chess-board, and his story of the jealousies and antagonisms surrounding it; and yet the model represented the bitter and bloody wars of over a thousand years. Not the smallest shrine but cost the best blood of the generation which fixed it there. The march of the Crusaders shaking the world has ended with Lord Shaftesbury and his journeymen soul-savers, and a generation of which few would give a drop of blood out of their finger to decide whether Pope or Sultan should own the spot where Jesus was buried.

It is sometimes said that culture chills enthusiasm. It may be true: they who have pondered the course of the world have detected the shadows that seem so solid to the ignorant. They see the great aims of one age dissolving into the fanaticism or sport of the next. They see the cards and dice that once divined destinies reduced to be the amusements of idle hours, and anticipate the day when the insignia of the Churches, which are already of more importance as pieces of a political game than as related to the religious interests of mankind, shall become the prey of the antiquary. With what mere curiosity does this crowd visit the models of Mexican, Egyptian, and other ancient temples in the Park of the Exposition! How little did the victims who counted themselves happy that their blood might redden these old altars, or the priests who slew them, dream that they were merely furnishing a few hieroglyphs for the future archæologist! This Siamese praying-machine, which twirls out its hundred and twenty prayers per minute, these Hindoo idols, do they excite more laughter or wonder than our European hells and devils will excite a hundred years from now? They will be quoted to prove the barbarism of the society in which they found believers.

Wherefore did the old temples exist, and what end do the monsters still worshipped by men answer? What purpose has this universe in leading Mexicans to slaughter their children before idols, or Japanese to believe in the existence of green devils with asses' ears? A question sufficiently answerable if we look at the fossil monsters which pioneered man in his advent to this planet. Not beautiful by any means was Ichthyosaurus, yet through him and his ugly comrades came the temper and force of man, even as the fashioned iron passed from ore to furnace, and from anvil to anvil. The artist does well who rests the pedestal of his fair statue on griffins; his hero is the transfiguration of their vitality. If the old temples and the battles about absurd dogmas have passed into chessmen, not so the strength they added to our sinews. Maximilian found lately 15,000 Mexicans as ready to be shot for the cause of their country as their ancestors had been ready to bleed on altars for a fictitious deity. The shrines of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem did not sink into insignificance before they had weighed the forces of every race, and apportioned to each its right position and territory. These were the touches that crystallised the new society of Europe. The boy with his whistle explores the laws of sound; in his play, he trains himself to harmony with the earth's centre of gravitation; the wing of the butterfly he chases will blend at last with great ideals, will shine in galaxies.

The world is a larger man, the man is a smaller world, and our lives repeat in embryonic changes the history of our race. Nay, we are individually liable to arrests of development such as are now found binding whole races of men to the world's childhood. There are Asias of thought as well as Americas of thought. Many a man who lives for six days of each week in civilised society worships on the seventh in ancient Mexico.

How many of us would proceed another step if we saw the farther end of our path, and the final outcome of the thing we are pursuing? Will this grand avenue change at length to a squirrel-track, and run up a tree? I heard a philosopher commend his friend, a chemist, whom he found converting his old shirts into loaf-sugar. Is there not a chemistry by which the human spirit also may convert its cast-off raiment into sweetness? There is nothing which the worship of Thought cannot transmute. He who humbly adores the supreme Reason will derive from each old creed or temple its contribution. The poet looked on the chambered nautilus sailing on with its old sealed-up chambers for hull and ballast, and sang—

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll;
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outworn shell on life's unsounded sea.

XX.

CHRIST ON THE ASS.

There are two things which I abhor—the learned in his infidelities, and the fool in his devotions.

MAHOMET.

Be of good cheer; the sullen Month will die,
And a young Moon requite us by and by:
    Look how the old one, meagre, bent, and wan
With age and fast, is fainting from the sky!

OMAR KHAYYÁM.

CHRIST ON THE ASS.

IN the Roman Catholic cathedral of Cincinnati, Ohio, I found a painting by poor Haydon, which through many fortuities had found its way thither. It represented the entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem seated on an ass. With all the intensity of personal feeling pervading the works of that artist,—who, with his high ideal, had an unequal execution,—he had placed in this picture his divinity and his devil. Wordsworth and Voltaire stand among those looking on—the former as a devout disciple, the latter as a scoffing Sadducee. Voltaire has his chin in the air, and has nothing but contempt for the whole affair; Wordsworth bends so low that his obeisance seems rather to the ass than to the man seated on it. The work is probably more suggestive than the artist intended. One cannot help being reminded of the great modern poet's abasement of his genius before the gallows and under the dogmas of the Church, and of how the great French iconoclast too often contented himself with mere denial, and, as the Germans say, threw out the baby with the bath.

The legend represented in the picture itself shows us how long the kind of reverence illustrated by Wordsworth has degraded the symbols of religion. Zechariah wrote, "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." The earliest Society for the Conversion of the Jews was very much of the same kind with the latest, and, in its eagerness to prove that all the prophecies were literally fulfilled by Jesus, mistook the Hebrew idiom of Zechariah, who meant by the ass and the colt one animal only; and it is recorded that Christ's disciples "brought the ass, and the colt, and put *on them* their clothes, and they set him thereon"—thus making Jesus ride into Jerusalem on two animals! We may not therefore be sure that Jesus really rode into Jerusalem on an ass at all; but the story is an abundant witness of the fact that a blind worship of the letter forces the highest truth of every age to ride upon superstition and stupidity. Whether it be the Old Jerusalem or the New Jerusalem, the reforming spirit must deal with the donkey element in human nature, and conciliate its stubborn bigotry. The geologist may discover what he pleases, but Society can receive his discovery only if it be seated on the cosmogony of Moses. Freedom may be good, but you must make it out somehow that the patriarchs held no slaves, and Paul returned no fugitive. Whatever reform you will have you can get, provided you can show that it is a "return to the old principles of the constitution;" to prove it simply an improvement on the same were fatal. Baptise your atheism, or Comtism, or anti-marriage doctrine, or other radicalism, as Primitive Christianity, seat it on a text, and you will have a fair chance for your New Jerusalem.

I would not underrate the ass; he is a patient and strong beast, with all his stubbornness and other drawbacks. I can tolerate him even when he comes on two feet, and lifts up his unmistakable voice in Parliament against Reform, or in Convocation against Church Disestablishment. But I cannot join in the chant and homage of Holy Ass Day. It is by the side of the apotheosis of the conservative quadruped that the scoff of Voltaire must be judged. The claim he made on St. Louis, "He should have been above his age," has been applied to Voltaire in censure; but as he recedes from us we perceive that his satire and laughter were the other side of a reverence for ideals, the ragged threads of one side of a tapestry whose cartoon on the other is not without majesty. There is a background to that scoffer not to be seen by the age that includes the ass along with the Christ in its homage. The fire in the smithy may be traced to the sun, the blacksmith's blow on the anvil employs the energy of every planet; and the great Denier, kindling revolutionary fires in which things held sacred shall be consumed, is not to be estimated as a mere hand and rapier without alliance with the hot pulses of the outraged heart of Man. The only pure Theism of this age is that which the remorseless assaults of Voltaire on Christian Mythology has rendered possible. Nevertheless, it is just because he did his work so well that we need not do it over again. We can lay our palm before the heroic prophet of Jerusalem without prostrating ourselves for the honour of having his ass ride over us, or even mingling with our homage a respect for the current superstitions above which he could not always rise.

But what shall we say of the cultivated Europeans whose god is a dead Jew? Wordsworth bowing there before the social and religious deformities of his time is really crucifying the man he believes himself worshipping. It was just that kind of reverence which sacrificed the brave reformer to the High Church of Palestine, and to the popular prejudices of his time; and it is the same principle which in all times will devoutly immolate truth on the shrines which have ceased to represent it. It is that which will sacrifice human love to a marriage form, and human intelligence to a university curriculum, and liberty to an ancient order.

We are swayed by the dead. Their skeleton hands are extended over the surface of society, and in obedience to them we drug ourselves and our children with calomel, and stab with lancets; we train the young as if they were to live in the age and country of Pericles or Augustus; we read them ghost-stories and witch-stories out of the Bible more horrible than the contemporary ones which we severely prohibit. Our property represents the wills of the dead in its distribution; our charities will not leave the channels they marked out, though through them they flow from the poor to the rich. And if even our Poets Laureate are found celebrating the churches of the dead, and the gallows, and war, and aristocracy, and, amid all the flaming swords before which tyrannies are falling, can find none to praise but the rusty Excaliburs of mythical ages, what chance is there for rescuing the people from their bondage to the Corpse-dynasty? If the light sent to us have turned to darkness, how great is that darkness!

It is true, as has been said, that we are permitted to look upon the old symbols and representatives of religion with a reverence which in the age and country of Voltaire would have been servility and cowardice; but it by no means follows that this will continue to be possible to us. The abasement of the Wordsworths implies the contemptuousness of the Voltaires. During the Twelve Days' Mission of the High Church in London, Voltaire edited the daily press. Holy vestments became "ecclesiastical petticoats." It will not do to tempt the retractile element in human nature too far. Ice will burn, and fire will freeze, and superstition will engender atheism. But unless we are to be given over to a mere succession of reactions, and to oscillate between donkey-worship and the bitterness which, with Voltaire, says of Jesus, "I pray you, let me never hear that man's name again!" we may turn from the two side-figures of Haydon's picture to honour one who seems to realise the true use of the ass. We can put our own bit in the mouth of the conservative animal, and make him bear us. As true chemistry came seated on alchemy, and astronomy was borne on astrology, we can hail the religion of an ideal manhood, though born among the beasts of the stall, and borne down to us on the religious animalism which moves only by reason of a devil's prong behind and a bundle of heavenly hay in front.

The old creeds grew out of human nature as genuinely as weeds and flowers out of the earth. It is well enough that the gardener, whose business it is to pull them up, should despise them as pig-weed, wormwood, chickweed, shadblossom: so they are, out of their place; but the botanist picks up the same, and recognises them as Ambrosia, Stellaria, Amelanchalia, Amaranth. *Natura nihil agit frustrà.* Let us coax each to yield its last bud.

To that end the resisting force will help us: the reluctant sod and seed-shell will by their stubbornness give the stem mineral for its stateliness, and conserve a relation between root and flower which shall sustain the latter in its aspiration to the heavenly hues.

A sage reminded his friends that the donkey was one of their poor relations. We must reflect, too, that he has seen better days. There was a time when the donkey was a masterpiece, and, turning from the ugly alligators and kangaroos which preceded him, Nature coyed his amiable face with the admiration of Titania. Since then higher animals have come, and have outrun and outwitted him; but we ought not to mock him because he is down in the world. His family, though poor, is still large and respectable in Church and State. Their family names now are Precedent and Dogma. We must, indeed, resist their pretensions to rule us, but not forget that nearly every precedent was once a landmark of progress, and every dogma, compared with some previous dogma, the watchword of a vanguard. There was a day when the dogmas of Satanic Power, Total Depravity, the Trinity, were advances upon yet gloomier theories, and had their martyrs. It was some Socinus who first imagined a Mother of God, a Channing who announced the doctrine of Purgatory. There was a day when slavery was the merciful alternative of the wholesale slaughter of captives, when the omission of woman from political equality meant her security from the terrors of military life, and when the gallows meant a restraint upon the wild passions of private vengeance. Respecting now not what these are, but what they meant, remembering that we live in the reign of man, not in that of donkey, we may compel each to bear us to our Jerusalem.

* * *

XXI.

"DEO EREXIT VOLTAIRE."

May they who celebrate thy name by wax-light at noonday tolerate such as are content with the light of the sun!

VOLTAIRE'S PRAYER.

There are blind ways provided; the foredone
Heart-weary player in this pageant world
Drops out by, letting the main masque defile
By the conspicuous portal. I am through—just through.

ROBERT BROWNING.

"DEO EREXIT VOLTAIRE."

THROUGH the beautiful garden of Voltaire's *château* at Ferney we walked, some of us with a sad reverence in our hearts; others came to "do the place," or "despatch" it, in ways facilitated by Mr. Cook's Tourist Tickets. Theology was present with approved antidotes to the poisoned atmosphere. "Voltaire was terribly afraid of lightning," said one. "When a storm came, he used to run and hide in that room." "You are not quite right," returned a bystander; "he was not afraid of the lightning, but, for fear of giving priests a new text to proclaim the divine wrath against free thought, he took precautions." "But he died a horrible death," said Whitecravat. "Not so horrible as Christ's," returned our Mephistopheles, "though the priests *did* manage to make it uncomfortable, and their successors have managed to make it terrible." "You seem," remarked Theology, "to think Voltaire did well to unsettle human faith as much as he could."

"He hardly unsettled it more than Jesus and Paul and Luther did." "But they put something in the place of what they removed." "See there," returned the other, "what Voltaire built up." He pointed to the little church, on which was written, "Deo erexit Voltaire." "You smile; but if, as I imagine, you are Protestants, you might without untruth write on your churches, "Erexit Voltaire." Unless he, or some man such as he, had written as he did, you would all have relapsed into the clutches of the Pope. He it was that placed reformation beyond reaction, and set you on the path where your children, if not yourselves, may one day find a Being who may be worshipped without a total degradation of the human soul. He who weeds the field raises the corn. Voltaire was as the eye of God on earth in his day, transfixing every error dishonouring to man; he was a Sceptic."

At the word Theology shuddered.

"You shudder; but have you ever considered the profound significance of that word Sceptic? The word σκεπτειν means 'to consider;' it signifies, strictly, to shade the eyes for better vision. A Sceptic, then, is one who shades his eyes in order to look steadfastly at a thing. He will shade his eyes (thus!) of all but the light necessary for seeing, will protect himself from garish public opinion, will dismiss prejudice and self-interest, and steadily examine each thing that claims his acquiescence. There are many words of a similar character, gentlemen, which you may be accustomed to pronounce only as if you touched a serpent, which, however, have their fair origin. What is a 'Latitudinarian' but one whose views have *breadth?* What is a 'Freethinker' but one who refuses to think as a slave? And what is the 'heretic' but one who is resolved to choose (*αἱρησω*) the faith he will hold, instead of employing a priest to do his thinking and his believing for him? The dishonour which the Churches have brought upon these words is a confession that they have found that the 'considerer' of their faith rarely ends in accepting it; that the man of broad opinions is never content with their pin-hole outlook on the Universe; that free thought is fatal to their fetters; that the 'chooser' of his own faith is not often found choosing theirs."

Theology slipped away affronted. The man whom it had aroused had, however, by this time a little company around him, attracted by curiosity. He was a queer figure, and as he spoke his chin seemed to become sharper, his nose to bend out like an interrogation, and his eyes shone like lamps from their cells, until I could almost fancy it was the portrait of Voltaire himself come out of the little room where we had been gazing on it, to haunt his old grounds again. He was about to leave us, but some of those present cried, "Give us another sermon!" A cynical smile came over his features as he turned again and spoke as follows:—

"The time will come, ladies and gentlemen, when everybody will be amazed that intelligent men should feel wounded at a defence of the duty of mankind to inquire, to consider, to doubt, before building faith and life on any proposition. Theology, in desiring an unthinking adhesion, claims that we should give up the well-tried rule of everyday life, where it is only by testing things by doubts that we can come to correct conclusions. There are, indeed, great differences between men in this direction; as the English writer, Charles Lamb, says, 'The shapings of our heavens are the modifications of our constitutions, and Mr. Greatheart or Mr. Feeblemind is born in every one of us.' One man will weep in secret that he cannot believe the Incarnation or the miracles; another will swallow all mysteries, and only regret he hasn't more. One poor saint will grope through the world melancholy, doubting if he is regenerate, or whether he pleases God; another is perfectly assured that he is of the elect, that he is God's darling, and gives himself no trouble about it.

"Which of these is learning the lesson of this Universe? Which is the really humble and surrendered soul? Let that be answered by our first deeper glance at this our mysterious Life, where we find ourselves as in mid-ocean with neither shore in sight. The motto of the good Montaigne was, 'Que sçais-je?' Philosophy everywhere echoes that question. While man is but a bundle of senses, he never doubts: Nature will first wean him, and that by causing him to doubt his senses. The child putting a stick in the water sees it broken; taking it out again, he sees it unbroken: his senses have deceived him. He will see stars nearly touching each other, and afterwards learn that they are billions of miles apart. He will hear a reply to his voice in the ravine, and discover no one there but himself. He will see a flat earth, and be compelled to believe it round. He will next discover that every piece of real knowledge began by a doubt cast on the senses, and discover that *Doubt is the method of knowledge.*

"What is certain? In all sciences the schools contradict each other. The historians are equally at variance. Cæsar and his wars, Homer and his songs, these are the subjects of critical battles almost as hot as any the one fought or the other sang of,—supposing, that is, that Cæsar fought, and that Homer lived! Is our existence even certain? An eminent thinker has declared that the man who has never doubted his own existence may be sure he has no aptness for metaphysical inquiries. Why should we believe what we see to have absolute existence, when each morning we awake to the illusiveness of figures as fully believed in while dreaming?—and dreams are not wilder than some things which pious and well-meaning people declare they have seen! Nay, can we be confident of the absolute truth of our own rational conclusions? All of us have given up some opinions that once seemed as reasonable as those we now hold.

"And even if any one thinks he has found a solid shore to this sea of ebbing and flowing theories and negations, shall he denounce the man who, unable to find such point of certainty, at least steers true toward what he believes to be truth? I, for one, should call the Sceptic the ideal man, with Nature's finest clay and clearest flame in the make of him. He stands for justice against autocracy in the sphere of thought, holding the balances with unflinching though human hand. He will press established positions hard: their fallacies will appear if they have them, or if they have none they will be made firmer. The young discoverer knows that the current opinion was only the conclusion of some previous young discoverer. Blind indeed must he be who does not see that such scepticism is the garment of a real faith; that unbelief expresses itself by the sloth or indifference which sits down to the comfortable conventional creed, and cries out with alarm lest the sceptic should topple over God's throne; while the great believer is he that calmly trusts the solidity of the Universe, has no misgiving that an honest thought can mar its destiny, and ever follows the Truth (however thorny priests make the path!), though it make him a wanderer past the warm and inviting temples of Superstition. Think you it was pleasant for Voltaire to be hounded through the country while living, with the certainty of having his body kicked as if it were that of a dog after death? It could only have been a living faith in his own heart, and the presence of a sustaining spirit of truth, which withheld the servile word that might easily have made him the darling of France. He stood to his post in the army of martyrs.

"The theologian referred to his death-bed. But let us recall the death-bed of the greatest freethinker who ever trod the earth. A young mechanic appeared preaching in the streets of Jerusalem, and with him the spirit of doubt was let loose as never before on this earth. His doubts led him when a child, it is said, to the doctors' feet, where he was found inquiring in the temple; they led him to the wilderness, to the cold mountain and the midnight air. He brought the existing order into doubt. Pharisee and Scribe, Temple Service and Palace, Church and State, bear witness by their wrath that a formidable questioning of all things is at hand. So his death-bed is a cross; his death-cry, 'My God, why hast thou forsaken me!' A terrible freethinker's end! Yes, every drop of his blood was paid for free thought! Every wound in his body, as we see it there, pleads that men should be large and free, unbelievers of all untruth; that the soul should plant itself firmly on its instincts, and hesitate for ever ere it sanction what it suspects to be false, knowing that every falsehood is a seed of injury. Around that freethinker's death-bed the voices of the darkness, agony, and death cry out to us all, 'Be freethinkers! If you must be so with a crown of thorns for your only reward, a cross your last bed, a mother's powerless tears at your feet your only sympathy, still be thinkers and be free!'

"What love of such a being as that is worthy of him, or of the grandeur of your own soul? Is it the love of a trembling slave? Is a blind, unreasoning, therefore undoubting, acceptance a fit homage to him who died for spiritual liberation?

"Thou brave young man, to whom faculties are given to be the germs of other faculties that shall for ever aspire to the Infinite Light, cherish every doubt that comes of simplicity and truth! As the little polyp shows on itself a dot, which draws to itself strength until it expands into another organised animal, so the doubt that arises is the germ of some higher truth to be unfolded. Cherish every doubt! To quarrel with these throes of the mind, whereby new truths are born, were to quarrel with the fire-seethings at the heart of the world, which shall presently cast up through the boiling seas some fair island for the habitation of man. For there is nothing solid which was not once fluid, nothing stable which was not doubted and tried. Scepticism is the only path to a noble certainty. 'He,' says Lord Bacon, 'who will commence with certainties shall end with doubts; but he who is content to commence with doubts may arrive at certainties.'

"This invites you, I know, to unrest of mind and sleepless nights; but who would evade the eternal laws, and say to the Spirit of Life, 'Pass on! animate the world; kindle every star; let the great heart beat from ocean to ocean; let the power fill full every trunk, branch, leaf, vein of nature,—but leave me alone to sleep! Let none of the divine currents fill or thrill me!' For you can write the history of this Universe on the smallest leaf of the forest; it is *Motion and Rest*: Rest the sleep, Motion the dream; Rest the prose, Motion the poetry; Rest the sleeping princess, Motion the prince whose kiss unchains her spell. These enter the inward world as the twin sisters, Doubt and Certainty. There is nothing certain save through doubt of its contrary, nothing doubtful save by the greater certainty of that which brings it into doubt. This conflict means a more stable peace. 'The wisdom that cometh from above is first pure, then peaceable.' In regions too cold for life the traveller desires to sleep; his sleep were not more fatal than, to the mind, the certainty which is content to slumber amid the evil and ignorance in this world.

"Yet this unresting life of the inquiring soul is not fair and good in itself, but only as the prophecy of a higher repose. It is thus with what we call the beauty of motion: motion is not the element of beauty, but in it we have a succession of attitudes and rests. The gazelle as it leaps presents a series of beautiful pauses: of any one of them we should weary; but each movement promises a position more full of beauty than the last. The aspiring human spirit suggests height beyond height, truth beyond truth, in its grand discontent with low and partial attainment.

"The seer beheld a great sea of darkness beneath; but above, a greater sea of light flowing for ever downward. Victorious Light!—into every soul some ray enters, enough to warm us with love, enough to show the path before us. The shadows lift not, but the one ray that inspires the spirit which rises above fear and pain, and endures for the invisible truth and right, is the morning star of a perfect day."

* * *

XXII.

CONFESSIONS OF CHRISTENDOM.

Kung-fu-tzee said, "Yeu, permit me to tell you what is knowledge. What you are acquainted with, consider that you know; what you do not understand, consider that you do not know it: this is knowledge."

The failing of men is that they neglect their own field to dress that of others.

CHINESE ANALECTS.

The awful shadow of some unseen Power
Floats, though unseen, among us.

SHELLEY.

CONFESSIONS OF CHRISTENDOM.

IN a small room I found a few serious men and women gathered together to listen to a Positivist teacher. My heart was drawn out toward the preacher as he sat by his little table in the plain schoolroom, explaining his faith with tempered earnestness, without any rhetorical flourish, depending entirely upon his conviction, serenely assured that the universe moved harmoniously around that! His worship was for Humanity, not as the shadow of any sublimer substance, but as in itself a great and essentially divine Being, capable of awakening the noblest enthusiasms and passions of the individual soul. The forms of this worship were old. There should be a calendar of saints and saints' days corresponding with those of the only Church the founder of Positivism knew; the saints, however, were real,—the great men and women whose thoughts and discoveries are moulding the present race of human beings. Yet the forms were just those which had impeded and persecuted and crushed many of the very saints held up for our homage. It was strange to hear in this company of scholars the echo of some of the vulgarest conventionalities about woman, her place and education, about the relative value of sciences, and concerning liberty of opinion. The stupidest Tory would have heard this theory of woman with satisfaction. The man who spends his days seeking the insect which shall add the missing link in the chain of life stretching from the zoophyte to Shakespeare, here found himself as a lackey in the presence of the superior caste of those whose discoveries put bread into our mouths. And because no man can demand toleration for the belief that two added to two make five, therefore free thought in religion is a delusion! The method was that of the Chinese shoe. Once decide that your infant's foot is not minimum, but maximum; that society and science and religion, just as they are struggling into existence, are full-grown and ready to be stereotyped, — and M. Comte is in order. Not having reached that point, the Pilgrim felt the previous question moved in his mind, and went away glad that the teacher had about him chiefly the taught already; hoping that the insect-hunter would still follow his fly as devoutly as if it were an angel, that woman would still struggle for her place at the side of man in the work of the world, and that religious thought would not clip its wings for this latest cage.

Yet why this rebellion of Christians against Positivism? All around us are Churches claiming for their several deities just the same enthralment which Positivism claims for its deity, Humanity. We are to follow ancient forms, to subordinate sciences, to celebrate saints; and no one is to regard it as an impertinence, so long as it is all for some being imagined by ancient Jews or Greeks to be a god. Must we not conclude that the contempt of Comte's religion really marks the more disinterested criticism of Christendom upon its own method? Christendom has been brought by this French devotee face to face with its own forms, separated from association, and from the habits and interests which have gradually become implicated with them, presented in their naked reality; and it detests them.

It was not very far from where the Positivists met that I found the "Spiritualists" assembled. A speaker and medium from America was engaging their attention; and their warmth, their enthusiasm, their implicit faith that they were in communication with the World of Spirits, were sufficient to suggest the feeling that might have prevailed at some meeting of the earliest disciples of Christ after the crucifixion, as they listened for the sound of the trumpet and awaited the descent of heavenly hosts. Amid these believers, their tongues touched with pentecostal fire, their eyes radiant with invisible visions, I sat among the blind unbelievers, and they prayed for our conversion with a sincere sympathy. The tables they saw floating to my eyes were still; their messages for me were demonstrably false, their trance-revelations mere trash. Yet when they appealed to the history of the world for the veracity of their experiences, when they referred to the Witch of Endor, to the angels that opened prison-doors for Paul and Silas, to the dumb spirits, the possessed souls, the walking on water, told of in the Bible, how could I but sympathise with their indignation at the contempt heaped upon them by Christians? Here are multitudes of living witnesses to events exactly similar to those which Christendom claims as its credentials. Here are unimpeached men and women, living in an age of scepticism and science, open to our tests and cross-examinations: are we to give them less credence than we give to people who lived in crude, unscientific, universally superstitious ages, and who cannot be examined at all? What explanation can be given of the aversion of believers in Christian supernaturalism from these contemporary miracles? Spiritism is only the appearance of their own mythology in a form detached from their associations and interests; it is legendary Christianity brought for the first time to a point where it can receive their own impartial verdict; and we know now what the human mind in this age really thinks of it.

There is a story told on the Mississippi of a man of that region who, being on a steamer for the first time, saw an individual in the saloon, whom he addressed civilly, but received no answer. Repeating his question, he still obtained no reply; whereupon he uttered very decided and not complimentary opinions upon the personal appearance of his silent fellow-passenger. This individual, as it turned out, was unaccustomed to the brilliant mirrors of the American steamers, and he went off in happy unconsciousness that his contemptuous criticisms had been all upon himself.

Positivism represents the hereditary body of Christianity, Spiritism its soul. The reception with which they are meeting plainly proves that, if either the forms or the beliefs of the common theology could at once disappear, they could never be reestablished; that they remain only because no real or disinterested verdict upon them in their own names can at present be secured. The judges are parties to the case. For the present, however, it is much that we have virtually carried it against them, by confession of judgment, in the suit of Common Sense and Free Thought against the Spiritist John Doe and the Positivist Richard Roe. Our posterity will not fail to apply the principles thus determined to things not contemplated by our Christian denouncers of contemporary miracles and of systems restrictive of the spontaneity and freedom of heart and mind. There are things that have a name to live, but are dead. A thousand witnesses to the resurrection of a dead man could not change the ownership of an acre before any Court in England. Is this a people that will continue to shape its religion on the supposed testimony of a few Jewish fishermen, long dead, to events thus assumed to be incredible?

XXIII.

AN ENGLISH SINAI.

A soldier of the kingdom of Ci lost his buckler, and, having sought for it a long time in vain, he comforted himself with this reflection: "A soldier of our camp will find it; he will use it."

CONFUCIUS.

I could not live—couldst thou ?—to hear a truth
Cry loudly in the heart, and strangle it.
Were this the end, no other life beyond,
Better to perish thus, our dust unurned
(So it might nourish still a living flower),
Rather than breathe such breath as hourly kills
The truth that blooms within.

VIVIA PERPETUA.

AN ENGLISH SINAI.

ENGLISHMEN are still fumbling about Mount Sinai in the East. Even from the noon of the nineteenth century it is only through a perspective of six thousand years that men can see the summits where, amid smoke and flame, the laws of God are published. Yet Mount Sinai were a hillock but for the man that stood thereon; and wherever a right and true man stands, there the earth rises heavenward, and the world trembles under the touch of God.

The road by which the Pilgrim sought his Sinai lay across the lonely heath that stretches toward the little village of Christchurch. Lonely as it was, he felt himself, journeying thither, but the next in a procession of those who, in ages past and present, had found something to attract them through those barren fields. Into the sea stretches Hengistbury Head, where, in early days, Saxon, Dane, and Roman successively landed, and built fortresses from which they sallied forth to conquer and rule the land—

each to disappear in due time, leaving some contribution of blood or power to be wrought into the character and laws of this people.

By many a superstition is this old region haunted. In the distance rises St. Catherine's Hill. There, where the chapel of that Saint stood, the ghosts of the old pagans buried in surrounding mounds were wont, it was said, to throng, seeking to be shriven, and so rescued from purgatory. Legend also says that it was originally intended to build Christchurch on that hill, but after the materials had been carried thither they were borne at night by invisible agents to the spot where the church now stands. In the course of building a beam was found too short, and it was miraculously lengthened. This beam was left uncovered, in order that the worshippers might see it, until very lately. The great square tower is a landmark in the distance, and as one approaches it the barren heath spreads into the green meadows that fringe the course of the Avon, which, having passed the homes of Sidney and Herbert, the altars of Stonehenge, and the soaring spire of Salisbury, has become serene in its silvery solitude, as it reflects the old church borne to its banks by the more silent stream of Time. For many generations are traced in its various architecture. The finest part is Norman, and has externally a beautiful lattice-work in stone, and a carved representation of cottage tiles. These architectural characters bear us back to the origin of cathedrals. In early times the rich could have in their castles or mansions each his private chapel or oratory; but the poor must needs combine their humble means to provide a temple for them all, worthy the holy ones they adored. But this building which held their common shrines and altars was at first but a larger cottage, with the same roof-tiles and lattices as the humble dwellings around it. The dormer windows of the cottage are still preserved in the steeple, which is the roof elongated so as to be a guide for pilgrims or wayfarers to the sacred home which was for all. But cathedrals have so long been separated from the life of the poor,—their significant signs have so long been mere architectural ornaments,—that those for whom they were originally built can no longer recognise any thread connecting their homes with them. The sexton of Christchurch explained that the tile-work was probably meant to imitate fish-scales! The internal construction of the cathedral means just as little to the worshippers; the nave is no more a *navis*, or ark of safety, the transept no more a hedge separating the sacred from the profane. Wherever these are now built, they are artificial ruins.

The old reredos at Christchurch represents the pedigree of Jesus and the adoration of the Magi. Beneath is Jesse asleep: out of his loins grows a tree whose many branches curve into niches for the reputed ancestors of Christ. In the centre the mother reclines, upholding the infant, before whom the Wise Men, and with them a crowned King, are prostrate. From the time when the moral grandeurs of the earth were represented in the bending of Scholarship and Royalty before the peasant who bore about him only spiritual splendours, pass we over many ages to the modern part of Christchurch, which holds the shrine we are seeking—the monument of Shelley. There, beside the fatal boat, his head supported also by a faithful Mary, lies the scholar who would not bow to the one before whom his ancient brothers came from the East to bend. His face finds in this marble the repose which the world decreed he should only attain in death. Perhaps it is because the ancient positions of the holy child and the king are now reversed, and the knees of the Church-Christ have become quite supple before aristocratic privilege, that the most notable object in this Christian Cathedral is the memorial of one on whom, while living, the Christian world shrieked out curses. He who replied to such curses that he had rather be damned with Plato than saved with those who anathematised him, has here his cenotaph among those whose only records are that they died under the blessing of the Church. In this old haunt of superstition its direst foe has his monument! Should this marble form, in the soft twilight, throb with the life and consciousness of Shelley, possibly he would not feel any nearer to the symbols around him, but rather prefer the old persecution to the homage secured by the potency of a baronet's demand.

Indeed, a modern Spiritist might easily suppose that the phantom of Shelley had been already at work in the choir, where old carvings represent a fox in the guise of a priest preaching to a flock of geese; a farmer praying while a solemn dog laps his bowl of milk behind him; and a king and a priest conspicuous in hell. At any rate, we may be sure that these were carved by the Shelley principle in Nature; and such ornaments in the church of the eleventh century implied an infidel's memorial in that of the nineteenth century. Yet, could he walk these old aisles, uncongenial as he might find all his contemporary environments, the poet might bring with him a perception of a subtle relationship to those whose aspirations built the gray walls, and to those who, from windows passionate with heavenly light, look with warm glances upon his pale marble.

The poet, says Schiller, is the son of his time. The poets who appeared on the horizon in the earlier part of this century were not the morning stars of the new era, but rather the fiery shapes about an era going down in blood. Of them one alone from the evening star of a setting is recognisable as the morning star of a rising day. By his side is Byron, in whom the ages of egotism reach their final flower and perish; with Shelley comes the first streak of the day of Humanity. The one will have his private sorrow ride him like a wild foaming steed driven by a demon; the other will have his grief spring up in human sympathy, his wrong signify every man's right.

Were our Sciences equal to rightly reporting the embryology of Shelley, many a phenomenon in the present mental and moral condition of England would be made plain. A magician in his Field Place nursery dressing up his sisters as demons to obey his potent wand; an alchemist in Sion School experimenting to find the elixir of life; a practitioner of the Black Art at Eton—where as yet Chemistry is a prohibited study—engaged, as he confesses to the terrified tutor, in "raising the Devil;" a mysterious boy who will not fag, and has that young world crying at his heels, "There goes mad Shelley!" a lover already, and writing with the beloved the romance of *Zastrozzi*,—he has drawn some drop of sap from every stratum of superstition beneath his feet, and passes them by swift transmutation to the incipient radicalism which breaks the shell at Oxford and walks forth a horror to students and professors.

There follows a prelude of ominous dreams. Oxford consists at the time of a number of professors who are busy milking a veteran and barren cow for students who assiduously hold a sieve for pail. Their labours are suspended for a moment by the apparition of a young gentleman, son of a Member of Parliament, who goes about cursing the King, denying the existence of God, and predicting the extraction of food for the millions from air and water, the instantaneous communication of thoughts over any distances, and the universal travelling by air. It is not, of course, a long work to put this wild creature on a stage-coach, and send him off, before proceeding to work with the heifer and the sieve again. It is true that the laws have prematurely decided that an Oxonian shall not be burnt for writing an atheistic tract, but there still remain exile from college, exile from a father's house, and exile from the heart that is nearest.

Now let us raise our thanks to those who alone never fail us,—the blind conservatives; to the professors who gave us a prophet whom they might have made into a metaphysical bookworm; to Miss Harriet Grove, who resigned us her lover to be the lover of mankind; to Sir Timothy Shelley, M.P., who enabled us to get out of his proposed politician a champion of Humanity. It makes one tremble to think that Shelley was once a baronet's son, under the roof of Oxford, at an age when, as in so many other cases, the Spirits might have been whispered out of him! How much we owe to Scholastic stupidity can be especially appreciated by a generation which has seen a Prime Minister, long dwarfed under the spell of Oxford, released by its suicidal simplicity, rising to a stature knightly enough to grapple with the greatest ecclesiastical wrong of his country, and to raise the flag of rationalism over the Episcopal Bench! Yes, Oxford, — thou dull whetstone of Saladin scimitars,—in our praise to Conservatism, the great nether stone of the mills of God, we cannot forget thee until thou also shalt be ground exceeding small!

Shelley, said Leigh Hunt, seemed like a spirit that had darted from its orb and found itself in another planet. "He was pious toward Nature, toward his friends, toward the whole human race, toward the meanest insect of the forest." "I never knew such an instinct of veneration," says Hogg. Robert Browning has described Shelley's poetry as "a sublime fragmentary essay toward a presentment of the correspondency of the Universe to the Deity." This was the man for whom Oxford had nothing but a curse! This was the "atheist" for whom the England that adored George the Fourth as the finest gentleman in Europe could furnish no home! Such reverence, wonder, worship, never before or since fed with their sacred oil a purer spirit; he ascended bravely the smoking mount, and returned to the calf-worshippers below with the light of eternity on his face, and they knew him not!

Shelley was the first-born of a generation of souls commissioned to revolutionise the thought and faith of England. After him there was a Shelley in every sane man born of an English mother, and the siege against Superstition began, never to be raised. The tragedy of Shelley's life was the warning of the Church to all who should ever attempt to think freely and bravely. It was a proclamation of piracy against every barque that should cast its old moorings and sail the seas with God. His life was never lived; it was scattered like bits of some exquisite mosaic never pieced together. They alone know the splendid design who can carry out in imagination, and colour with the pigments of their own hearts, the great forms suggested by the fragments of his song and his life. Such—so has our Christendom steadily declared—such, so outlawed and ruined, shall be every life which is hurled against us and our dogmas. Do we require more lamentations over "Lost Leaders," more recantations in Scotland or Cambridge, more humiliations before Convocation, to prove how potent is the threat? Bend or be broken! is still the word of the Church to the scholar yearning for his ideal life; live the life, think the thought, we prescribe, or perish with all your hopes unfulfilled around you!

But, sad and fragmentary as was his life, it shines out like a rainbow above those who have surrendered. Beside their finest embroidered ensigns we lift this strip torn by shot and shell from the banner of a great cause, and know that there is still room for the lilies to blossom upon it. Lo, beneath the tattered life and name and work of Shelley let the scholars of this day gather, and take their oath of knighthood. What part has a scholar with the savage creed that wears the scalp of Shelley at its belt? What place has he in the assembly of those who count the belief in an angry, jealous, arbitrary Jehovah to be pious, and call the aspiration which soars above the idols of fools atheism? Why should the man of culture exclude from his social circle the man who talks bad grammar, or dismiss the servant who believes in witches, but welcome the surpliced or kid-gloved believer in hells, devils, and Balaam's talking ass? The scholar is not the retained advocate of the party that pays best. He is not the attorney for commerce, nor the professional casuist of those who would combine the advantages of conventionality with those of simple truth. Better he should again be a hermit than dwell in society at the cost of honour. As yet, alas, though subtle as the serpent, our Scholarship has also its double tongue, uttering now that which is true, next that which is sordid. From the day when Shelley was banished from Oxford, no scholar has remained under the flag of the common Christianity save through a visible servility. But it is spiritual perjury! If we demand that the banker shall be honest in money matters, that the soldier shall be brave, that the judge shall be just, shall we be satisfied that he who is consecrated to Reason shall weakly or meanly part its sacred raiment among those who would feign trick out their lucrative creeds or customs with its divine sanctions?

Shelley brought the Orthodoxy of England to its Judgment Day. Up to his time there were great and honest scholars in the Churches; but the cruelty, the coarseness, the ignorance inherent in those Churches was then revealed, the falsehood was exposed; and only by some kind of bribery, conscious or unconscious, can any genius or real culture be found there longer. We ought to be able to depend upon the honour of the Scholar not to compromise the purity of the light he is set to feed and guard. There is needed a Scholar's caste, removed from the world of Self-seekers; a brotherhood of those whose verdict is the dictate of absolute reason and rectitude; the fraternity of those who, amid a world that weighs eternal verities in their relation to gold and fashion, steadily say, "Unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united!"

We have lived long since Shelley's time; the brave thinker finds many a warm hand to clasp his where the exiled poet found but few, and those the hands of fellow-exiles; but superstition still reigns over the conventional world: it is cruel as ever; and he can hardly be sure that he has fought the good fight, and kept his trust, who does not feel that he has read a chapter of his own experience in the life of Percy Bysshe Shelley, and drunk of the cup of which he drank. For, though no man knoweth his grave unto this day, he saw God face to face, and brought upon the tables of a broken heart the laws of those called out of spiritual bondage.

XXIV.

GRAVES AT BOURNEMOUTH.

This is the Law of God, that virtue is the only thing that is strong.

All the parts of human life, in the same manner as those of a statue, ought to be beautiful.

SAYINGS OF THE PYTHAGOREANS.

One voice alone, one harp alone, begins;
But soon joins in the ever fuller choir.
    The people quake: they feel
    A glow of heavenly fire.

One day, when rest my bones beside a fane
Where thus assembled worshippers adore,
    The conscious grave shall heave,
    Its flowerets sweeter bloom.

KLOPSTOCK.

GRAVES AT BOURNEMOUTH.

A QUARTER of a century ago a prophet stood in his London pulpit and uttered these words:—

"In that old St. Pancras, with its ancient burial-ground, at a remote corner, those who are disposed for such a pilgrimage may find a spot, an unobtrusive unostentatious tomb, built some forty years ago by William Godwin for Mary Wollstonecraft; and where, some few years ago, those who had been united in life became blended in the grave. When people can rightly estimate their benefactors; when nobility is judged of by intellect and spirit, and not by title and station; when woman's wrongs are righted, and man's rights are recognised; when achieved freedom throws its light and lustre back on those who toiled through the transition-time, and were but as stars that rose and set again before the coming day,—then will crowds frequent that now solitary corner; laurels will be planted around that humble monument, and sculptured marble will tell what public gratitude awards to those who lived and wrote and spent the best energies of their lives in preparing the way for man's redemption from social and political bondage."

In a beautiful churchyard at Bournemouth sculptured marble now tells that there rests the dust of the author of *Political Justice*, the authoress of *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, and their daughter, the widow of the poet Shelley. The clergyman who, chiefly at his own expense, built this charming church, and now preaches in it, naturally resisted the importation of such unhallowed remains and uncongenial phrases into its vicinity. But there are certain forces stronger than clergymen; and there, close to the Keble window, sharing the light that kindles the windows glowing with the faces of saints and apostles, stand the tombs of three people who, while living, were types of moral heresy.

In the church, I listened as the priest read concerning the lives and sayings of some of those through whose fair forms the light fell upon his page, and reflected on those spirits whom Dante saw in the lower world, who could see plainly things in the far past, and even in the future, but to whom the present was all confusion. And my response to him was: "Sir, among all those holy ones who adorn your Church, none more patiently lived and suffered up to their crowns of light than those you so reluctantly admitted to their repose under the cypresses out there. And if these faithful ones—dreaded by the clergy in their day, by you hallowed with every tint of glory—could live and move, be you sure they would gather around the grave you dread, and say, ‘This is our brother, these are our sisters.’”

The Luther of Morality has not yet appeared. The Reformers of the Seventeenth Century overthrew the Theology of the Church, but they necessarily left the morality of the Protestant world essentially monastic. The morality of Protestantism is unrelated to the age in which we live; and so every wrong finds it easy to secure the defence of pulpits. Theology brings out its texts to strengthen the slave's chain, to oppress woman, to make the Sabbath a prison for the poor. We are grown-up men and women in commerce, in steam locomotion, and telegraphic intercourse: in our estimates of right and wrong we still dwell in the cloister. It follows from this preservation of a dead ethical body that there is hardly any form of wrong which cannot flourish without conflict with the old fences of Church or State. Selfishness, coldness, inhumanity, hardness of heart, they are all quite secure; yet their reign promises the reaction which shall lead on the Ethical Reformation. The value of the Reformation under Luther was the degree to which it turned the attention of mankind from observances to virtues, from rites to practices: the morality related to it, and yet to come, must turn man from ordering his conduct with reference to other worlds and their awards, and hold him to his obligations to this world, to his fellow-man, and his own heart. It will shift the arena of life from heaven to earth; it will direct all moral effort toward man who can, instead of toward God who cannot, be benefited by it; it will declare all possible duties to be duties to man—man in us or outside of us. It will thus, at the foundation, blend what have hitherto been separated—Religion and Morality.

Religion is essentially man's duty to himself. On the instant that a man has reference in his conduct to some satisfaction conferred upon God, his act is an act of superstition, for his deity is assumed to be dependent on man for his happiness, and is thus regarded as subject to the passions of men. A man is religious who reveres his own soul sufficiently to be loyal to its dictates, to cherish and cultivate its faculties, and to preserve it from guilt. But this fidelity to the sacred self is the centre of any true fidelity to others; only by disobeying the laws of our own nature can we wrong others. Separate our relations to others from self-truthfulness, and our service to them, though it may be what they desire, is harmful to them—the mere catering to their prejudices, or indulgence of their faults—and therefore essentially immoral.

Supposing our eyes, then, fairly turned to the conditions and needs of the planet upon which we must live and work, we look upon humanity no longer as an aggregate of souls that may be damned or saved hereafter, but as a society of human beings, each endowed with faculties whose highest object is to be unfolded and devoted freely to their definite and appropriate work, as it is the object of a torch to give light. To this view a man is lost when his faculties are stunted into incompetency; to save a soul means to reap from it what it can do for the cultivation and well-being of this world. Morality thus becomes the law and means whereby human faculties may secure their growth and their right application. That would be a moral law which should secure this, that an immoral law which should prevent it.

That which is now called Morality directly and deliberately stunts or even ruins the faculties of man, and on principle. This will appear to those who consider its standards of nobility, commercial success, Sabbath-keeping, expediency; but beside the graves of Bournemouth I revert only to that point upon which our hereditary monastic morality is most stern and uncompromising—marriage. Alas, how many graves are there in the world over which might be carved that grim idol, marriage, about whom nearly all our social superstitions are entrenched, with his blood-reeking altar!

What is the moral difference between the purchase of a wife for a night in the Haymarket, and the purchase of one for life in St. George's Church? There is everything to be said for the Haymarket proceeding as compared with that at Hanover Square; it does not pretend to be religious, it does not systematise itself in the forms of a home. Prostitution may be guilty of many sins; the marriage of convenience, the marriage for an establishment, the diplomatic marriage, commit the same sin once, but it does not end. Do you say, Judge not? Nay, judge not you, that you be not judged! So long as Society cares only for the marriage-licence and the priest's blessing; so long as it receives with a smile the woman legally bought, and commends Mary Wollstonecraft to the Thames river because her true love does not fulfil its forms; so long as it holds that chastity demands the sacrifice of every woman who has in any instance disregarded its laws, and makes the street or the brothel the only possible refuge for thousands purer than many of those who shut the door in their faces; so long as it prefers secret sin, intrigue, the hate in the chamber behind the smile in the drawing-room, the daily lesson of hypocrisy learned by children, and whited sepulchres called homes, to honest divorce; so long as it will encourage the young man and maid who have made an incongruous marriage to starve their hearts and waste their lives rather than confess the mistake, and seek out the hearts needed for their perfection;—so long will those whose eyes are cleared of superstition see the throne of Marriage, like that of Dahomey, resting upon human skulls.

Nothing but superstition ever sacrifices human beings to institutions. The origin of the marriage superstition is pagan. The vestal, doomed to a living burial if her vow was broken, reappeared as the nun. The old idea of conciliating a heavenly autocrat by taxation of herds, by roasted meat, by offering up the fruit of the body for the sin of the soul, survived in the asceticism which made eunuchs of the priests of Cybele, the eunuchs "for the kingdom of heaven's sake" commended in the New Testament, the Skopsi of the present day in Russia, the celibates of the Roman Catholic priesthood, the Bachelors of English Universities. Those who could insult every mother by declaring that the only good man was born of a virgin, naturally pronounced marriage a concession to human weakness, an indulgence which could be made tolerable only by the authority of the Church. Hence the "sacrament" of marriage; and hence the superstition which lingers about it in regions once governed by the Church.

Like every other superstition, it is suicidal. Permitting the minimum of freedom in its regulation and duration, marriage finds the young already dreading it. The number increases of those who shrink from stooping to a doorway which leads to what may be, indeed, a happy home, but may be, too, an iron prison from which there is no escape but over the ruins of character. Formosa now excites sympathy; presently she will gain respect. When finally she shall deserve respect, when she also shows that she can be faithful as lover and mother, the lock-and-bolt system will break down. Society will ere long be glad enough to assimilate contracts between man and woman to contracts between partners in business. Then love will dispense alike with the bandage on its eyes and the constable's aid. And as for the thousand phantoms in the distance,—the deserted wives, the abandoned children, &c.,—though the worst of them are less terrible than the realities of the present, we will not be frightened by them into any distrust of the laws of the universe. The new seed will shape itself into sufficient branches and leaves; the rains will not cease, nor the sunshine. When wants come, wants will be met. Even the poor African has learned that "if the Alguana-tree will die to-morrow for lack of water, water will come to-morrow." The organic forms around us did not spring panoplied from the brain of any Jove; each fibre, antenna, organ, records a circumstance encountered and an energy put forth to meet it. The adequate marriage will begin its growth when mankind set themselves to discover what will help man and woman rather than what will help God. When it is felt that wife-murder is a heavy price to pay for a literal conformity with the supposed sentence of Jesus concerning divorce, we shall consult reason in the matter rather than the crude reaction of a pure soul against the corruptions of a period.

Am I told that woman dreads the easy divorce? Naturally, for the prejudices and arrangements of Society have not been adapted to the easy divorce. Let her know that, under the changed sentiment which shall follow changed law, she will meet with sympathy where now she would encounter suspicion; let her know that she will, if divorced from one she loves not, have only her fair share of the burdens entailed by the original mistake; and she who of all persons suffers most if the home be false will welcome the freer marriage.

In England we smilingly walk our halls of Eblis, covering the fatal wound; but our neighbours across the Channel are frank. Their moralists cannot blot out the proverb that "Marriage is the suicide of Love." Is it any truer here than there that, as a general thing, the courtesies of the courtship survive in the marriage? "Who is that domino walking with George?" asks Grisette No. 1, as reported by *Charivari.* "Why," returns Grisette No. 2, "do you not walk behind them, and listen to what they say?" "I have done so, and they do not say a word." "Ah, it is his wife." But what might be George's feeling if he knew that his wife might leave him some morning? "If conserve of roses be frequently eaten," they say in Persia, "it will produce a surfeit." The thousands of husbands and wives yawning in each other's faces at this moment need not go so far for their proverb. If it be well, as it seems to me to be, that this most intimate relation between man and woman should be made as durable as the object for which it is formed will admit, surely the bond should be real to the last, a bond of kindliness, thoughtfulness, actual helpfulness. So long as the strength of the bond lies simply in the disagreeable concomitants of breaking it, so long as it is protected by the very iron hardness which makes it gall and oppress, what need is there of the reinforcement of it by the cultivation of minds, the preservation of good temper, and considerate behaviour? Love is not quite willing to accept the judge's mace for his arrow. When the law no longer supplies husband or wife with a cage, each must look to find and make available what resources he or she has for holding what has been won. We may then look for sober second thoughts both before and after marriage. Love, from so long having bandaged eyes, will be all eye. Every real attraction will be stimulated when all depends upon real attraction. When the conserve becomes fatiguing, it will be refreshed by a new flavour, not by a certificate. From the hour when a thought of obligation influences either party to it, the marriage becomes a prostitution.

These things are not written against the real marriage, not to defend licentiousness or levity in the relations between the sexes. They are written in the interest of a conservation of that purity and sincerity which marriage originally aimed to secure between them, but which must now be set aside in a spirit equally solemn with that which first named it a sacrament. Nothing here written is so severe an arraignment of it as the satire of the cynical press and the club, which find in the bazaar of daughters, and the girl and the wife "of the period," their favourite target; or let what I write be read by the light of the Divorce Court. It is premature to say what the new marriage is to be: Necessity—God and Nature, that is—must instruct each step in our progress toward that. The inadequate institutions which have been bequeathed us out of the past are the cast seeds of withered flowers. The resuscitation of the same flowers is impossible. Meanwhile, it is but a false conservatism which says, Let us live on the seeds as they are; the true says, Let us sow them; let us part with them, that we may obtain what is really in them. Only a few can live on the seeds; as they shall rise from the dust, they will be a harvest for mankind. A true faith would fearlessly sow the very stars for seed if their autumn had come.

All religion and all ethics are summed up in Justice. In religion, Justice appears holding her sacred balances between all our passions and faculties, demanding that I shall not give to one part of me what is due to another. Devotion shall not rob health, nor the senses reason, nor intellect the affections. The selfish faculty may destroy the harmony of character, as the face may be deformed by being heaped into a monstrous nose. In morality, Justice appears forbidding the artificial inequality between man and man. Immorality is such by not respecting the equal right of another. The criminal seeks happiness, which is legitimate; but he seeks it by destroying the happiness of others, which is illegitimate. The lawful conditions by which any desired object may be obtained simply represent the rights of others, by which every faculty is limited, or rather directed; to violate those conditions is so much injustice. But this injustice is also an injustice to the wrong-doer himself. Therefore there is no difference between religious and ethical law. Whether it be manifested as the sacrifice of health to lust or to piety,—or of the permanent to the transient,—or of the public good to private ends,—or of Humanity to a national interest,—or of labour to capital,—or of the people to privilege,—the one old serpent with tail in mouth encircling the tree of Life is for ever Injustice.

But the Golden Rule has now no hell-fire with which to enforce its command to the individual; and the worn-out legal machinery which we have inherited cannot overtake the ingenuities of selfishness in commercial or social life. There is hardly any one who fears the poor Devil, especially since his nonsuit in English Courts; and there are few oppressions which cannot conform to the letter of our ancient laws.

It is true that our situation is not comfortable. Unhappy is the king-crab in the interval between its shell just cast and that not yet formed. But a fact cannot be groaned or raged out of existence. We can only console ourselves with the reflection that the increasing immunities which selfishness finds, as fears and phantoms fade, and prisons are cheated by the waxing light, are themselves disciplinary. Liberty will not fail to tax her gifts. These crumbling laws were reached through a long experience of lawlessness; they represent the progress of man through a wild liberty to self-control. The forces which guided man through many formidable experiments to his social contract cannot perish with their forms. He will find that edged tools will still cut, and fire burn. And as with increased knowledge and liberty life becomes more valuable, and its resources more various, the dangers of self-mutilation, the horrors of the penalties for which priests can no longer promise heavenly compensation, will but shift the flames from a possible future to an actual present. If we have lost Satan as a "bogie" for weak minds, we have also lost him as an apology for our sins. If we can sway the balances of judge and jury by a sufficiently weighty lawyer's fee, and grind the poor within the formulas of law, and oppress woman by our sovereignty in our "castles," we cannot help thereby inviting the human heart to follow us beyond the traditional confines, and laying the foundations of new and adequate laws. The fox reveals, and so in the end mends, the hole by which he escapes. We are indebted to the street robbers for our street lights, to tyranny for our republics. In the Mills of God there are nether as well as upper stones, and to the former as much as to the latter is due the fineness of the flour.

For, lo, the one great law, Justice, is to the moral what gravitation is to the physical world: no planet, no pebble, but must obey it. "Law," saith the Brahmin, "is all hands and feet; it is all faces, heads, and eyes; and, all ear, it sitteth in the midst of the world, possessing the whole. It is the inside and the outside, the movable and immovable of all Nature. From the minuteness of its parts, it is inconceivable. It standeth at a distance, yet is present. It is that which now destroyeth, now produceth.

It presideth in every breast. Justice, being overturned, will overturn." He who knoweth this, though seeming weakest, shall move firmly as the sun on paths where the strongest who know not justice shall fail.

XXV.

THE CATARACT AND THE RAINBOW.

XXV.

THE CATARACT AND THE RAINBOW.

The dice of God are always loaded.

GREEK PROVERB.

He my servant is dear unto me who is free from enmity, the friend of all nature, merciful, exempt from pride and selfishness, the same in pain and pleasure, patient of wrongs, contented, constantly devout, of subdued passions and firm resolves; . . . of whom mankind are not afraid, and who of mankind is not afraid; . . . who is unsolicitous about the event of things.

BHĂGAVĂT GEETĀ.

The moving Finger writes, and, having writ,
Moves on: not all your piety and wit
  Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,
Nor all your tears wash out a word of it.

With Earth's first clay they did the last Man knead,
And there of the last Harvest sowed the seed:
  And the first Morning of Creation wrote
What the last Dawn of Reckoning shall read.

OMAR KHAYYÁM.

THE CATARACT AND THE RAINBOW.

I STOOD by Niagara, gazing on its smooth pitch, and its islet of green, holding their own steadfastly above the mad dash and deafening roar of the waters. The winds came howling out of the cavern beneath: on the pendent harp they changed to melodies. Above all stood the shimmering rainbow, and its sweet prophecy said,—Over this mad rage hovers the circle of inviolable law. No drop of the cataract but gathers to its sphere, and rises or falls, by the law that shapes and moves the gliding planets overhead. The winds too have their eternal channels. Fear thou not, therefore, the wild roar of human passions, nor the seemingly unchained freaks of human will. Climb to their table-rock, and over them shall be seen bending the luminous arch that softly chains them in their pit.

What is it in the idea of Necessity from which we recoil? Alas, cries one, it makes us machines, the good man a machine turning out good, the evil man a machine turning out evil; there is no longer responsibility; praise and blame are alike idle: nay, why should we act at all? why not fold our arms, and bow before the events which transcribe what is written on the iron leaf?

Not of much worth is the argument from consequences—not properly, indeed, an argument at all. Is a thing true? If so, its consequences sink into questions of personal convenience. The extent to which it will affect our prejudices or habits is not more admissible, in the consideration of a truth, than the consequences to our capital at the bankers of assuming $2+2=4$ are admissible in determining arithmetical law. Yet, since reason is so often paralysed by the phantoms it conjures up, one may condescend to remind the timid that men are very apt to be mistaken in estimating the results of opinions they do not hold. Every belief has an environment of related beliefs. If the believer in free agency were able to isolate the belief in necessity from its related outlooks, and attach it to his own present opinions, it might paralyse his activities; but, that being impossible, let him remember that, when he has arrived at the point of the road reached by the fatalist, he may see other visions now withheld from him. Paul, Mohammed, Cromwell, Milton, the Puritans who founded New England, John Calvin, Frederick the Great, Carlyle, Emerson, have all been earnest believers in Necessity; has it destroyed their energies? The truth is, that instead of men having their self-reliance or their power paralysed by believing in destiny, it has in every age proved to be a source of inspiration and force; their lives have been solemnised by the faith that they were recording on earth the decrees of Heaven. Each such believer has felt himself not merely a man engaged in what might or might not turn out effectual, but rather an organ of the inevitable—as it were, the hand of God himself touching and moulding the world.

But this, it may be said, is the effect the doctrine of Necessity has had when given great men to work upon. How, then, would it logically affect common people? First, we should cease to take credit for our good actions. Egotism would have less place in our work. Next, we should be less angry with the wrong-doer. We should trace his vice to some malformation. We might restrain him as we would a tiger, but with as little indignation as we have for the tiger. These new principles might tell in calmer estimates, and in the abolition of all punishments which bear traces of vindictiveness. But would the absence of pride and revenge, the accession of humility and charity in human character and in our laws, be such a terrible evil?

We do not choose our temperament, which makes us grave or gay, conservative or radical, religious or worldly, and determines the degree and character of our influence. It may depend upon the race whose blood is in us, on the climate in which we are born, on our forgotten ancestors; but wheresoever forged, it is a link no man ever broke.

We do not choose our intellectual gifts. Newton's father cannot make him a haberdasher, nor Turner be made a barber. On this fatal difference of gifts depend poverty and wealth, success and failure; and their outcome is in the condition of Science, Literature, Art, and Religion.

Is man any more free to choose good or evil, right or wrong? The Creed will depend upon the country, the time, the family, amid which he is born. Here he will be a Christian, there a Mohammedan. The like facts will determine his morality. Here he will have one wife, there four; here he will help his neighbour, there he will eat him. Or if we find the stone, bronze, iron, and steam ages surviving side by side in our cities, each will be faithfully reflected in our statistics, in our courts, and in our drawing-rooms.

But may not man cultivate or control what is in him? May not the bad disposition be corrected somewhat, and the dull mind quickened? Behold the next bar of Fate—Circumstance! Whether mind and heart will be restrained or developed shall be determined by the lot without, conspiring with the motive within. Is the lot a den of vice? —a home of luxury? Will the man have means of education, leisure to think? or, if the lot be poor, will there be the inherent power of Burns or Franklin to rise above it? The chain within coils into that without.

How, then, comes the word "freedom" into our language? and how is Dr. Johnson to be answered —"Sir, we know we are free, and that's an end of it"? Our reply is, we know we are not free, but that our action is determined by motives. Our *feeling* that we are free is part of the general illusion which is an element in our destiny. "Nature is helped by no mean, but Nature makes that mean;" and her sure plan is secured by the consciousness of volition up to the point where a higher energy can work. The child does not see beyond its game; Nature looks to the training of its limbs and faculties, and humours its fancies. Man's praise and blame are the terms of a larger game; but they have no deeper root than the consciousness which attests one thing to the ignorant, another thing to the enlightened. Dr. Johnson's reply begs the question; the necessitarian does not know he is free, but the contrary. The rudest and crudest belief which is deep enough to control instinctive action may claim the support of what is called consciousness as if it were a special faculty, but which has never been shown to be any faculty at all. The feeling of freedom in action and power of choice is part of the destiny of persons in certain stages of development; but beneath works the inevitable fact. Why do we praise or blame, why reward or punish? Because we know that men are impelled by motives; and praise, blame, reward, punishment, supply the strongest motives.

Why, then, do we seek to influence men toward this or that course of conduct, when we know that they will surely do what they must? Because we must.

Cannot a man do what he chooses? Yes; but he can only choose under limits. He cannot choose to subsist on poisons, nor to leap over the moon.

But what are these walls by which we find ourselves enclosed? They are eternal laws. From them we derive all our real freedom. The man who has a mill to be turned finds in the laws of falling water the enlargement of his power. Marrying the feeble individual hand to electricity, gravitation, light, heat, its power is indefinitely multiplied.

On the other hand, suppose our ignorance, our passion, were really unchained; suppose we could inflict a real harm on the universe. Were that glad tidings? What mean poets when they sing, "He maketh the wrath of man to praise him,"—or, "Truth crushed to earth will rise again;" or prophets when, in the face of seeming evil and oppression, they recognise the steady triumph of Justice? They see that circular line which the far-seeing Greeks drew around all their representations of human conflict, the line that cannot be overpassed in a universe which has an all-compelling purpose. If we ascend into Heaven, it is there; if we make our bed in Hell, it is there. Adieu, Doubt! He who recognises the beautiful laws which cannot be marred will, amid the seeming chaos of selfishness and wrong, dwell in calmness, and see them

> Forging, with swart arms of offence,
> The silver seats of innocence.

The captain does not fear that some day waves will lose their power to sustain ships. The merchant, loading his vessel on the sand, has no misgiving that some day the tide will fail to reach the water-mark. The man of faith has no fear that evil will turn out to be the end of the universe. Happy as a co-worker for the aim that cannot fail; raising his private scheme into harmony with the universal purpose; renouncing all merit, as he sees his absolute dependence for all nobleness upon forces and principles to which his personality is surrendered; pitying, but never fearing or hating, those who are morally deformed,—he who has caught a gleam from the beautiful Necessity wherewith we are surrounded, draws near to the starry rest, and is lulled by the music of storms. Snows alight on him as crystal crosses and petals; hails he will see as masked sunbeams.

The rainbow rose and fell as the cataract raged against its rocky walls—rose and fell, and sometimes seemed broken and flitting away like a luminous snake. But evermore it returned, and, seeming to yield, held the monster fast in its soft circle. Even so, as the great American has reminded us, when the gods could not bind the Wolf Fenris with steel or with mountain weights, the soft silken thread around his foot held him. It bent with his bendings, and was concealed by its minuteness. In his wildest range of ferocity it was with him—spun, possibly, of his own hair. So Niagara sends up the spray for its rainbow. So Tyranny draws after it its own Nemesis. So every wrong rouses the right, and danger excites vigilance, and Humanity moves on its orbit, balanced between action and recoil. Whoso knows this will carry the might of gravitation into his purpose; he will match the elements with their like in himself; his self-reliance will be fatal, conspiring with the inviolable winds and the stars in their courses.

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XXVI.

THE UNCHURCHED

Make thyself dust to do anything well.

SAADI.

If you want to find the true magic pass into heaven, scores of rival professors press round you with obtrusive supply: if you ask, in your sorrow, Who can tell me whether there be a heaven at all? every soul will keep aloof and leave you alone. All men that bring from God a fresh deep nature,—all in whom religious wants live with eager power, and who are yet too clear of soul to unthink a thought and falsify a truth,—receive in these days no help and no response.

JAMES MARTINEAU.

Blacken thy heavens, Jove,
With thunder-clouds. . . . .
I honour thee? For what?
Hast thou the miseries lightened
Of the down-trodden?
Hast thou the tears ever banished
From the afflicted?
Have I not to manhood been moulded
By omnipotent Time
And by Fate everlasting,—
My lords and thine?

GOETHE'S *Prometheus.*

THE UNCHURCHED.

I SAT amid the circle of ancient stones at Stonehenge; then visited the fine Cathedral at Salisbury, and paused in its circular Chapter-house; then, coming out, watched some boys at play. The lads had drawn a diagram of many compartments on the ground, and, hopping after their oyster-shells, kicked them from point to point till the circular base was reached. The diagram was a very fair ground-plan of a cathedral. The urged oyster-shell is, as some antiquaries say, a travesty of the ancient initiate passing from point to point—catechised here, baptised there, repeating his shibboleth further on, anointed, confirmed, until at last he is received into the inner circle.

The thing in common with Stonehenge, Salisbury Chapter-house, and the boy's game was the circle. *Church* is probably *Circ*, with the *c* Italianised. The circle was of old the type of the Deity, as reflected in the round horizon, the sun and moon. Dancing dervishes, fiery Bel-wheels, circular processions, all repeated on earth the celestial motions; and the Church became the visible abode of Him who had not yet been seen, as "the circle whose centre is everywhere, whose circumference nowhere."

Thus in the beginning of Christianity, so soon as it was able to describe a circle for itself, we find the saints within, the profane without. The initiated could only be admitted by passwords. The passwords, gradually collected, form the creed.

The centre from which the first circle or church was described was its pretension to hold the one Ark of safety. Under Luther's blow that circle was broken up into points. One of these points became the centre of the next circle; it was the authority and infallibility of the Bible. Science has destroyed that. What will be the next circle? —the Church of the future?

In its long history one fact stands out, though the Church has been strangely unconscious of it; namely, that while by mysterious rites in one age, and by dogmatic confessions in another, it has been initiating its proselytes, it has itself been indoctrinated and pressed from phase to phase by the great human circle around it. Its hard line drawn about the believers has been again and again broken, widened, reformed, in spite of its fierce hostility, though it now cherish among its shibboleths the alterations forced upon it by pressure from the unchurched world. Its growth has been like that of a tree. The young sap and the fresh integument of the living season harden into the trunk as the last annual ring added; and this too shall be surrounded by a ring that is not in the tree, but in the sod, the clouds, the light. When the new circle is to be formed around the old Church, the living forces will be found gathering outside of it. The Voice will be heard, not in the Synagogue, but crying in the Wilderness. The people will be moved by aspirations of which the Church knows nothing. Where it once controlled, it will be led through reluctant compliances. Such are the signs fatal to Churches. Compromise will always stretch the existing circle to the utmost; but at last it must break up into new centres, in some one of which enough vitality may be found for the development of the new organisation.

Such is the critical period that has overtaken the Christian Church in our own time. The tremendous fact, which cannot be argued or raged out of existence, is, that the great interests of our time gather about the unchurched world. Nobody can pretend that the leading literature, science, philosophy, or art, are within the Church. Our greatest scholars and thinkers are what the Church is compelled to regard as infidels. The rising generation is sitting at the feet of men of genius who train it into antagonism to the Church. No Church is now found leading in any great social or political movement: the movements concerning woman, land, education, go on without their aid, and generally against their hostility. In due time the Churches will take credit for the successful issue of them all; but for the present they chant their creeds before mouldy altars, and stand on the canvas of our time like Michael Angelo's "Entombment"—a group of blurred faded figures, of which the only one plainly discernible is a Dead Christ.

What will be the circle wide enough to enclose the excommunicated Nineteenth Century? We have had a Church of Priestly Authority, a Church of Biblical Authority, a Church of Christ; there is nothing left for us but a Church of God. In that common term of all religions, which priests have preserved in their superstitions only as a seed is kept through ages in the shroud of a mummy, we may behold the germ of the next religion of mankind. All our Evangelical Alliances, our Protestant Unions, our Œcumenical Councils, will but tear its mouldy vesture more and more into shreds; all our scepticism, philosophy, and science will but more and more warm that seed into life. Simple Theism has but few churches now; it is a newly-discovered and as yet unexplored continent; but so was America a little while ago. They who, like Plymouth Pilgrims, have settled in the winter time on its rocky verge know little as yet of its prairies, savannahs, and Eldorados; but they already see that it is to be the next great home of human hearts and thoughts. While they reject the creeds, the Science and Literature of our age are reverent. This shows that the marriage of Faith and Reason is already consummated; and to their nobler offspring the Future belongs as an inheritance. Heart and Intellect, so long separated by Superstition, shall accord in spirit, and to their harmonies the steps of men shall move as move the planets above to the music of blended Wisdom and Love.

Utopian Pilgrim! thine is but one vision among many; thy neighbour's prophecy is that there shall be no Church at all in the Future. He sees bands of men leagued for practical earthly ends—Temperance, Education, Equality of Women, Sabbath Reform, and the like; but no society for the culture of the religious or moral sentiment.

It is even so. And, happily, the energy that has built the fair forms we see above, around, beneath us, will still work on beyond our visions, and may be trusted to the end. Bit by bit they grew,—these exquisite forms,—each a sum of creative demands and supplies. Not a feather, not an antenna among them, but records the new environment which evoked it. No race in its zone, no zoophyte in its rain-drop, but is the exact epitome of its circumstances. The changed form gathers all that went before it; the forms become fluent under the same need that shaped them, and Nature conserves herself by change. That which passes, passes because it is no longer necessary. The traditional creed passes with the need which formed it. Every fossil in the earth tells its story. It is not necessary. Men are virtuous without it. It no longer implies self-denial or any divine passion to believe it. The cross has become golden, and may be coined into money. The virtues it once implied gather with the freethinkers and reformers who will not bow to it. The impulse which separates them from Christendom is the centre of a new creation. What that new creation will be we can, indeed, only imagine; but we know that the Spirit which built Christianity when Judaism fell, which built Protestantism when Romanism crumbled, cannot be crushed under the ruins of any temple. We know that, like the bird with the tropic flower on its wing, the bear with the polar snows on its coat, the form will correspond to the characteristics of the age in which it shall appear; that its science, literature, liberty, philanthropy, will all be raised and repeated in it. We know that, as man bears in his brain all the animal passions and instincts that preceded him, no altar that ever flamed, no incense, or chant, or rite, or prayer, will fail to pour its essence into the new creed, though a single word be enough to utter it. The old hunger of the soul, its old need of raiment and shelter, have not survived the blights of superstition and the frosts of denial to fail us at the last.

Onward, ye children of the new faith! The sun of Christendom hastes to its setting, but the hope never sets of those who know that the sunset here is a sunrise there.

XXVII.

THE REJECTED STONE.

The principles of the superior man commence with the duties of common men and women, but in their highest extent they illuminate the universe.

CHINESE ANALECTS.

At the last day men shall wear
On their heads the dust,
As ensign and as ornament
Of their lowly trust.

HAFIZ.

THE REJECTED STONE.

SOME years ago I was wont to repair on Sunday mornings to Smithfield to hear the orators of the open air discourse on the great problems of these times. There is no theory or heresy conceivable by the human mind which was not ventilated on that hallowed acre. No eloquence that I could find in any Church seemed to me comparable with the rudest speech of these unkempt infidels, who showed what fruit stakes of wood, quickened by fires fed with human blood, may bear after some generations. The butchers who now occupy that spot never hewed and hacked meat more cleverly than their predecessors cut up dogmas; and the market hardly compensates for the loss of this unroofed cathedral, or furnishes more genuine food for the body than was then dealt out to the mind of the artisan. But its worshippers betook themselves to the parks and squares. Here, however, they were interrupted; the police were empowered to make them "move on." One Sunday morning I saw in one of the open spaces a man walking backward, pursued, apparently, by a mob, in whose faces he was shaking his fists. Drawing near, I found that it was a street speaker and his audience fulfilling the condition of moving on. Thus for a year or so they moved, until the new railway arches at St. Pancras were built; under these the preachers, lecturers, and disputants are now permitted to collect themselves and their thoughts. There I have followed them, and listened through many a summer evening to such wisdom as can alone lift up its voice in the streets.

A few orthodox preachers appear on the scene, to pray and sing and utter the old inducements of future woe and bliss: but they bring their listeners with them; and it is a performance of actors too poor to have engagements, with the cast-off scenery of regular establishments, and hardly excites more than the smile of those who pass by to attend the real attractions of the place. As one approaches, he might fancy that he had got into a courtyard of Bedlam. A confused din of voices coming from the centres of contiguous groups, each struggling with the other in the air, pelts the wayfarer like a consistency of rain, snow, and hail. But let one stop and take heed; he will find himself at a focus in the whispering-gallery of the world. There is no question discussed in the great Universities, or Church Councils, or Parliaments, but is discussed here.

On a certain night I stood for an hour between three groups, one of which was discussing the authority of the Catholic Church, the second the miracles, the third the existence of God. Archbishop Manning never urged a stronger argument for the necessity of a Church authorised to interpret the Bible than was there uttered by one of the poorest of his flock. "You admit the authority of the Bible as the word of God?" he asked of his antagonist. "Certainly." "But you say every man must put his own interpretation upon it?" "I do." "Now, suppose a lawyer were to go before a Court of Law with a case, and claim the right to put his own interpretation on the laws of England, what would the Judge say to him? He would say, Sir, these laws have been interpreted by our Courts before you were born. I have got to follow the precedents. I can't set my own private opinions, much less yours, against the former decisions of this Court. And if it has been found necessary to establish Courts to interpret the laws of England, is it not just as necessary to have an authority to interpret the laws of God?"

While the poor Protestant was fumbling about for his reply to this I gave heed to the assailer of miracles. "Why don't they happen now?" he cried. "Because the time of miracles is past. They were needed to call the attention of the people to Christianity then." "Well, aren't they needed to support

Christianity now? John Stuart Mill don't believe it, Professor Huxley don't believe it, the foremost men of this age don't believe it. There are thousands on thousands of people in London who pay no attention to it. Now, you just raise to life out of the graveyard one of our dead children in the name of Christ, and the Churches won't remain empty." Such was the echo of Strauss, of Parker, of Renan, which found its way through the lips of an artisan in patched clothes. But the largest crowd was gathered around one who was fiercely denying the existence of God. "If there is a God, why are you permitted to suffer? Why do ignorance, crime, and wrong run riot through the land? What would any man among you do if he were omniscient and omnipotent? Would he nòt be found in every home of misery and want and sickness, relieving distress, restoring health? Would he not remove from the world tyranny, ignorance, and sin? Are we to suppose that there is an omnipotent God who doesn't show as much benevolence toward his creatures as a man would who had the same power? Look at the earthquakes that swallow men up like flies,"—and so on, with much more of the same sort.

Here were the sheep; where were the shepherds? Chanting empty services to emptier pews; standing beside their cold altars and crying, Ho, all ye that hunger, come and hear us read about bread that was sown, harvested, and eaten in ancient Palestine!

Seest thou these great temples? There shall not be left of them one stone upon another which shall not be cast down. Their builders have rejected the stone which evermore breaks to its own measure all that falls upon it, which grinds to powder that upon which it falls. The oath of the Universe is pledged that only that shall stand which has for its corner-stone MAN. Amid cathedrals built for the splendour of Popes or the glorification of God, institutions raised on the assumption that the people were made for them, not they for the people, dogmas holding the human heart and reason fit sacrifices for them, the steadfast forces of Fate have quarried from the rejected instincts and necessities of the masses that rude block lying in the mud at St. Pancras which shall one day be recognised as the corner-stone on which alone any temple can rest securely. The Voices at St. Pancras are not the voices of ignorant working people; they are, to those that can receive it, the voices of Elias, of half-clad John in the Wilderness, which must first come. Only before one who, in conformity with human nature, can increase, can their fatal negations decrease.

The worship of the Nazarene peasant and carpenter has its Avatar to-day in the interest gathering about the little and the lowly. At last an age has arrived which begins to understand the secret revealed to St. Augustine that "God is great in the great, but greatest in the small."

First came Science, the one true representative of the Apostolic Succession in this age, reversing all estimates of high and low. Studious rather of actual flies than of possible angels; turning from the infinite to search into the infinitesimal; finding the philosopher's stone in every pebble; circumnavigating the rain-drop and reporting its curious tribes; pursuing insects as ardently as suns; reading in flowers the laws of constellations; tracing the bursting of cosmical rings and the generation of worlds in a spinning drop of oil; exploring primeval forests in frost-pictures on window-panes; following each step in the ascent of the worm to man; showing the consent of solar systems to the motion of a finger, — Science has come to this generation wearing on its head the dust, and has taught us to see in that dust a crown more glorious than ever adorned the brow of Royalty.

Next came Poetry, turning at last from the emptiness of the glittering, to the treasures of the leaden, casket: Burns, and the "wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower" disturbed by his plough; Wordsworth, with his reflector turned to the field, holding a celandine; Hood setting to sweet minors the sighs of the sempstress; Leigh Hunt and Keats competing as laureates of the cricket and the grasshopper; Carlyle rising to song once, as the moth found its pyre in his candle; Goethe twining the mystical tendrils of souls about the little Gypsy Mignon; Browning telling of the destinies of empires bound up with the carols of the barefooted Pippa from the silk-mills; the tender humanities of Béranger, of Lowell, of Whittier, and of Walt Whitman, who shows the Leaves of Grass as fit subjects for his epic as Homer found for his the Heroes of Troy.

The whole transcendental movement of New England, which gave to America its only distinctive literature, which sketched its ideal in Brook Farm communities and realised it in the abolition of Slavery, unfolded beneath the breath of the Seer of Concord, who knew—

> There is no great, there is no small,
> To the Soul that maketh all;
> And where it goeth all things are,
> And it goeth everywhere.

I am not unmindful that the chief Minnesinger of our time still dresses his Muse in court costume, and still rehearses to charmed drawing-rooms the deeds of kings and knights; nor that those he has inspired are more listened to as they sing of the Medeas, Atalantas, and Tristrams, than Clough lingering with the peasant-dance amid the heather, or Allingham and Barnes, whose morning glories climb on cottage-doors, or Robert Buchanan setting the footfalls along the Strand to melody. But may not the drawing-rooms be under an illusion about their favourites? As the Pre-Raphaelists, seeking an extinct Art, ploughed the furrows of an Art to come; as Culture, recoiling from vulgar comradeship, travels eastward till it gets westward,—even so, by many blind ways, even those most antiquarian, the dream of Poetry leads to the one Shrine. Tennyson will voyage with Ulysses rather than with Paddy on his emigrant ship; but at last on Californian sands they will sit together, and see the old world with the same distrust, and say, "We will return no more!" That which has enabled Tennyson to touch the heart of his age is the degree to which he has represented its vague and profound scepticism. Subtly interfused with nearly every poem he has written is the spirit he has received from the popular unrest, the moral misgiving and intellectual doubt, whose waves are steadily drowning all that cannot float. The Woman's Rights Reformers find their texts in *The Princess;* and *In Memoriam* is the sustaining air for all Left Wings. The secularist lecturer takes from the "Lotus-eaters" his burden against the present, and from "The Two Voices" his curtain against the future. Vainly will men fight their shadows. Carlyle is still compelled to further the human equality he made necessary when he tore crowns of painted paper in pieces; Father Newman stands powerless before the Frankenstein of Rationalism he conjured up. The Spirit of the

Age is the divinity that shapes our ends, and cares little for our rough-hewing of the same; it can allow seeming reactions and illusive eccentricity; for, whatever tacks the ships may make, its magnet is hid near every compass, and will bring them all to one port at last.

The novelist,—the real preacher of our times,—once minding only high things, now aspires to things of low estate. The romance of the past gathered about the castles and mansions of the great, and sought the company of lords and ladies. But these are now left to penny novels read by ambitious domestics, incurious concerning their own familiar lot. The romances which have really made an impression on this age have been those which have had for their themes the operatives of factories, the artisan radical, the dens of Field Lane, the Toilers of the Sea or *Les Misérables* of France, or the poor Uncle Toms of the Plantation. The success of Charles Dickens is the most significant literary phenomenon before us. This graduate of Fleet Street has woven the haunts of wretchedness and sin in London into a texture of pathos, humour, and beauty. No one can walk those streets with the same eyes as before since he plunged into their turbid life and emerged with hands laden with pearls—pearls from the hearts of thieves and outcasts. There is a divine sparkle in every heap of rubbish. It is as if our coal-dust should crystallise to diamonds. Humanity, forgetting the fine people of Walter Scott and Bulwer, turned to acknowledge a debt to this figure-head of London deeper than is due to all the sermonisers around him. Not the Churches, but him, we thank for the brightest rays that shine with Christmas mornings. Children unconsciously twine the laurels of their happier life about the brow which has laughed Squeers with his ferule out of existence, and caused the flowers of gladness to bloom along their paths, so long blighted by Puritanism: Chadband and Stiggins read on their merry faces a reign of terror, others the radiance of a new era in our civilisation. And when at last that grave lay open in the ancient Abbey, to close at last upon some part of all of us, and the people and their children came and heaped it with flowers, each flower was a symbol of the fragrance, the tints innumerable, which had bloomed at his touch out of lives and hearts that were dead, through him made alive again.

Lastly, what has been the history of Art in England? With splendid antecedents, from decorating Southern palace and cathedral with gorgeous *tableaux*, Art came hither to suffer a decline graduated according to the liberation of the people from the past it expressed, up to the day when a particularly English Parliament ordered the finest pictures in the country to be burnt. No longer to be dragged at the wheels of the most exquisite of chariots is this unromantic Englishman; he will betake him to the driving of his own ugly cab. How shall the flower thrive when the stem is broken? The Englishman had utterly lost the faith which had culminated in the art of Raphael, concerning whom he cried, Away with your Madonnas! give us your fat naked women instead of them! So Raphael, and the long line of post-Raphaelists, gave those mixtures of paint and patriotism, of figment and pigment, which passed here for high art, until the true prophet of English Art came; meek and lowly he came, riding on an ass!

But at this point of our pilgrimage we reach the house of an Interpreter, at whose feet we may well sit in silence for a space.

"Near the south-west corner of Covent Garden, a square brick pit or well is formed by a close-set block of houses, to the back windows of which it admits a few rays of light. Access to the bottom of it is obtained out of Maiden Lane, through a low archway and an iron gate; and if you stand long enough under the archway to accustom your eyes to the darkness, you may see on the left hand a narrow door, which formerly gave access to a respectable barber's shop, of which the front window, looking into Maiden Lane, is still extant, filled in this year (1860) with a row of bottles, connected in some defunct manner with a brewer's business. A more fashionable neighbourhood, it is said, eighty years ago than now—never, certainly, a cheerful one—wherein a boy being born on St. George's Day, 1775, began soon after to take interest in the world of Covent Garden, and put to service such spectacles of life as it afforded. No knights to be seen there, nor, I imagine, many beautiful ladies; their costume at least disadvantageous, depending much on incumbency of hat and feather, and short waists; the majesty of men founded similarly on shoe-buckles and wigs! . . . 'Bello ovile dov' io dormii agnello:' of things beautiful, besides men and women, dusty sunbeams up or down the street on summer mornings; deep-furrowed cabbage-leaves at the greengrocer's; magnificence of oranges in wheelbarrows round the corner, and Thames' shore within three minutes' race. None of these things very glorious; the best, however, that England, it seems, was then able to provide for a boy of gift; who, such as they are, loves them—never, indeed, forgets them. The short waists modify to the last his visions of Greek ideal. His foregrounds had always a succulent cluster or two of greengrocery at the corners. Enchanted oranges gleam in Covent Gardens of the Hesperides, and great ships go to pieces to scatter chests of them on the waves. That mist of early sunbeams in the London dawn crosses many and many a time the clearness of Italian air;

and by Thames' shore, with its stranded barges and glidings of red sail, dearer to us than Lucerne lake or Venetian lagoon—by Thames' shore we will die. . . . He attaches himself with the faithfullest child-love to everything that bears the image of the place he was born in. No matter how ugly it is,—has it anything about it like Maiden Lane, or like Thames' shore? If so, it shall be painted for their sake. Hence to the very close of life Turner could endure ugliness which no one else of the same sensibility would have borne with for an instant. Dead brick walls, blank square windows, old clothes, market-womanly types of humanity—anything fishy and muddy, like Billingsgate or Hungerford Market, had great attraction for him; black barges, patched sails, and every possible condition of fog. . . . No Venetian ever draws anything foul; but Turner devoted picture after picture to the illustration of effects of dinginess, smoke, soot, dust, and dusty texture; old sides of boats, weedy roadside vegetation, dung-hills, straw-yards, and all the soilings and stains of every common labour. And, more than this, he could not only endure, but enjoyed and looked for *litter*, like Covent Garden wreck after the market. . . . Even his richest vegetation in ideal work is confused. . . . The last words he ever spoke to me about a picture were in gentle exultation about his St. Gothard, 'that *litter* of stones which I endeavoured to represent.'

The second great result of this Covent Garden training was, understanding of, and regard for, the poor, whom the Venetians, we saw, despised; whom, contrarily, Turner loved, and more than loved—understood. . . . Reynolds and Gainsborough, bred in country villages, learned there the country boy's reverential theory of 'the Squire,' and kept it. They painted the Squire and the Squire's Lady as centres of the movements of the universe, to the end of their lives. But Turner perceived the younger Squire in other aspects about his lane, occurring prominently in its night scenery as a dark figure, or one of two, against the moonlight. . . . 'That mysterious forest below London Bridge'—better for the boy than wood of pine or grove of myrtle. How he must have tormented the watermen, beseeching them to let him crouch anywhere in the bows, quiet as a log, so only that he might get floated down there among the ships, . . . which ships also are inhabited by glorious creatures—red-faced sailors, with pipes, appearing over the gunwales, true knights over their castle parapets. . . . Among the wheelbarrows, and over the vegetables, no perceptible dominance of religion; in the narrow disquieted streets, none; in the tongues, deeds, daily ways of Maiden Lane, little. Some honesty, indeed, and English industry, and kindness of heart, and general idea of justice; but faith of any national kind, shut up from one Sunday to the next, not artistically beautiful even in those Sabbatical exhibitions, its paraphernalia being chiefly of high pews, heavy elocution, and cold grimness of behaviour. . . This religion seems to him discreditable—discredited—not believing in itself; putting forth its authority in a cowardly way; watching how far it might be tolerated; continually shrinking, disclaiming, fencing, finessing:. . . not to be either obeyed or combated by an ignorant yet clear-sighted youth; only to be scorned."

Thus was trained the first artist whose eye was atwin with the country, through which it ran to and fro like the eye of the Lord,—a veritable Peer, by divine right, of England. Art thou he that should come? Behold, the poor have the Gospel preached to them. The apotheosis of cabbage-leaves, sailors, fish-women, is at hand; these shall decorate sea and land, and shine in the firmament.

Turner was himself blinded by excess of light, no doubt; and the eyes, long trained to copying dark old pictures by altar-lights, gazed upon this dawn of English art only at cost of seeing a spot on the heart of its sun, or of sore eyes. But ancient art sank fossilised to its stratum when Turner began to paint England—its Labour, its Sorrow, and Death. The Pre-Raphaelist Brothers are the first to see that the old flowers have withered, must be henceforth honeyless for ever; and they will wander back to the old clime and age whence the seeds of them were wafted. Let the shadow go back on the dial beyond the age of Raphael! Let us repair to the light-fountains of the morning world, when as yet there was some childlike faith and enthusiasm among men! Thither went the earnest pilgrims only to find a desert, but a desert from which they could see, as never when near to it, the seed of all the faded arts of Greece and Italy thickly strewn in Covent Garden and Maiden Lane,—their first grass-blade prophecies appearing in the glories which Turner had thrown on the walls of English homes.

Happy for the wild prophet, for the eye-dazzled school he founded, and for us—the people—that the Interpreter arose whose words we have already read; who, always eloquently, albeit sometimes fitfully, has managed to utter to this English race the great admonition, that no Art can ever spring up here unless it spring from the hearts and homes of the people; that never until the homes of the poor are happy can the mansions of the rich be beautiful; and—this above all—that any true Art must be the fair expression of the faith that is, not of creeds that have had their day and their flower in Greece and Italy.

Heine stood with his friend Alphonso before the cathedral at Rheims. "Why," said Alphonso, "cannot such structures be built now?" "That," replied the poet, "was built by an age of convictions; ours is an age of opinions."

How little does the copyist in the Venetian, or Florentine, or English Gallery understand the practical need which created the work he imitates! He would repeat, for applause of *dilettanti*, a picture which was wrought to save the unlettered poor from hell, and allure them heavenward; he would make a prettiness of saints and demons who on the old canvas waged a war with eternal issues for the soul of the peasant, who thus only could realise the mighty drama of heaven and earth. The domes are copied when the shrines for which they were built have perished; and the spire in which the roof of the cottage was transfigured, pointing the peasantry from afar to their common religious dwelling, remains only to show the poor the particular spot with which they have nothing at all to do. For some time yet these things may call themselves Art. The graceful serpent having glided away elsewhere, we must stuff this its cast skin as well as we can, and persuade ourselves that its faded spots are the stars of heaven. Meanwhile the living line of grace and beauty in its seeming death is already putting forth for eyes subtle as its own the jewels that shall adorn its new sheath.

What convictions have we corresponding to those which sculptured the Phydian Jove or the Milonian Venus, or painted the great Italian pictures, or built St. Peter's dome? None. Then for the present no real Art. The one thing we really believe in is Scepticism: this is the inspiration of our Science, of our clamour for more education, of our democracy; they are all the utterances of the clear and vigorous Misgiving which distinguishes this age. But in these directions alone can we find the tendencies which, shadows as they are, point toward the faint gray that must flush to the dawn of Art. Our very Scepticism having sent us into Town-halls and Corn-exchanges in England, and into Free Schools, Universities, and State-houses in Germany and America, these begin to gather a certain elegance about them. The American School-house rises in the smallest village like a castle. The Birmingham Town-hall has more poetry about it than any of the Churches around it. The Hoe cylinder press has a touch of transcendentalism in its gentle power. The gas-fixtures are putting forth pendent lilies. There are graceful forms visible at the cattle-shows. A tint of beauty shines upon all these green shoots, that mark each where some sinew of necessity has given its stroke of work in good faith.

Poor things are these. Be it admitted. But whence came those splendours of ancient art we copy and recopy? Those illuminated letters of old manuscripts were but the shapes of hut or tree or animal footprint with which the savage marked for his fellow the fact he would convey. The blending tree-branches, the trefoil flower, swell to the Gothic pile; and the sunrise is photographed on the flamboyant wall. The cornice was the rude Northman's shield against the snow; the fringe on the tower was made for cross-bows. The simple devices of necessity in one age become the ideals of another. The serious occupations of their ancestors become the sports of the luxurious. The primitive trade-marks become heraldic arms. There is not a beauty shed upon us by the fading Arts of the past which was not born of some effort of man to adjust his life to the emergency before him, just as the Covent Garden greengrocer worked a hundred years ago, as now, all unconscious that one sane mind at least would find his incidental "litter" fit to grace the summit of St. Gothard.

Yet I would not say that the Arts of the past have accomplished their work. Locked up, here at least, from the people,—especially on the one day when they might see them,—they have not yet done the only work they can do; they have not stimulated the horny lens in the labourer's brow into an eye. There is beauty enough all around us, had we eyes to see it. "Mr. Turner," said a sagacious lady, "I never saw anything in Nature like your picture there." "Don't you wish you could?" answered the artist. The artist is he who sees a thing; the rest of us see but a little surface of any object. When the people have eyes, Apollos and Madonnas will walk the streets before them. Can any art equal, O mother, the shining hair and blue eyes of thy child? One day, an eye like that which looks from the parent to the babe will be taught to scan the vast cartoons of Eternal Beauty covering earth and sky, and not only the one darling lineament of it revealed by love.

Who built the grandeurs of Baalbec? The conviction that induced three hundred of the Carthaginian youth to lie victims upon its altar for the good of their city. Baal, Jupiter, Jahve,—the Sun in his manifold apotheoses,—they have had their kingdoms, their sacrifices; but Humanity has its temples and altars yet to come. Already the flower of the American youth has shown itself ready to die for the most despised of races; and over their graves shall ascend the conviction that to create man himself, to rescue him from degradation and unfold his powers, is the high task of the coming Art. In its light, the finer souls shall look upon the meanest abode where a human Spirit dwells with a reverence equal to that which ancient Syrians felt for the temple of the Sun; and what was once done for saints and gods shall be done for men and women. So wrought the original Creators of Art. A beggar sat for one of the apostles in the Vatican, a barefooted flower-girl for one of its angels. But I dream of a yet higher Art, which shall make the beggar an apostle of God—not in paint, but in reality; which shall transform the flower-girl to an angel in deed and in truth; under whose touch dead hearts and strong brains shall come forth, like rock from the quarry, to rise in the walls and domes of a humanised world. Of the creations of that future Art, the greatest sculptures and pictures of the past are but sketches and studies; its destiny shall be to realise those patterns "seen on the Mount" in purified towns, happy homes, clean and sweet tenements, universal education, beautiful health, and, above all, in securing to every human being the freedom to carve his or her own being into the character for which each life exists,—the statue worthy to be unveiled in the presence of God and man.

XXVIII.

PIXY-LED.

No one can foresee the quantity of light which will be generated by letting the People be in communication with men of genius. This combination of hearts will be the Voltaic Pile of Civilisation. We know of nothing too lofty for the people. . . . The multitude—and in this lies their grandeur—are profoundly open to the ideal. . . . The more divine the light, the more is it made for the simple soul.

VICTOR HUGO.

It seems His newer will
We should not think at all of Him, but turn,
And of the world that He has given us make
What best we can.

CLOUGH.

PIXY-LED.

WANDERING in Wales I found a rustic who believed in pixies, and I deciphered from his dialect his notions concerning them. There were not many of them nowadays, he said, with evident satisfaction, and especially few in the neighbourhood of the railways; but still they could be occasionally heard in the woods and under the earth, and every now and then a traveller was misled by them. How was he misled? Why, he seemed to see his own house-gate just before him, but when he came near it, it was somewhere else; or there might be something to attract him which always glided somewhere else, and really was nothing at all; and so he wandered far from his way. (Here was the Hindu Yoganidra, or Illusion, holding her own within sight of the Atlantic!) To my further questioning he replied that the pixy-spell had to yield to either of two antidotes; if the victim turned any garment he had on inside out he recovered his wits, or else when the next Sabbath dawned he would be released from the delusion. On hearing this grave account I at first experienced a certain delight at getting so near to the ancient religion of our ancestors; but the next moment the antiquary in me was shamed: I remembered that I was a pilgrim toward the shrine of a human religion, and bethought me with thankfulness that the pixies had almost vanished, and that only one here or there could now be found who believed in their existence. Happy are we that live in an age and land of light and knowledge, I said, whom Science has taught to look upon the fern or the toadstool as an organism of wisdom, and not as the hiding-place of an elf that waylays and misleads us!

But when I wandered through the cities of England and Scotland, and saw the behaviour of the people on the first day of each week, the credulous Welshman did not seem so isolated as before. Surely the Sunday had laid a spell upon the people similar to that which it had been said by him to dissolve. For six days of the week we go about in our right senses; but on Sunday our populations lose their wits, and stray helplessly from their own Nineteenth Century homes to wander amid the delusions of antiquity. On Saturday the English people are among the most sensible people in the world; on Sunday, the stupidest.

The parallel between the pixy-led and the Sabbath-led people is not so fanciful as it may at first appear. Our Science of Mythology has proved the pixies to be the shrunken forms of the once powerful gods of Northern religion, lingering, since Christianity outlawed them, in a size diminished for the requirements of the nursery, and lurking in the superstitions of districts unvisited by the schoolmaster. But it is equally true that the sanctity of the Seventh Day is the survival of the old worship of Ashtaroth or Astarte, Queen of Heaven,—the Moon, that is, which renews itself in four quarters of seven days each. There is even a trace of the intelligence previously ascribed to the Sun and Moon in the Mosaic account of their creation—"the greater light *to rule* the day, and the lesser light *to rule* the night;" and the belief hides in our word "lunacy," as well as in various rustic superstitions concerning the new moon. This new moon is continually associated with the Sabbath in the Bible, and it is the consent of scholars that the festivals of the two originated together. The priests of Moses retained the sacred days and festivals of the older faith—festivals known to Assyrians, Arabs, Indians, and even Peruvians—but of course associated them with their own deities. At first the sanction of the Seventh Day observance was that Jahve had rested on that day after his toils of creation; but that seems to have been not sufficiently impressive, since in the second edition of the Decalogue the Sabbath is associated only with the deliverance of Israel from

Egypt. It became so powerful, that a man could be stoned to death for the slightest work done on that day; yet its sanctity must have to a great degree vanished at the time when Jesus experienced less inconvenience from his repeated violations of it than he now would in a Scottish village. Since his time the Seventh Day observance has lingered only among Jews and a few barbarous tribes.

As Moses adopted the festivals of the Moon, the Christians, after the death of Jesus, adopted the festivals of the Sun. As Moses associated the Sabbath with Jahve, the Christians connected the Sun's Day with Jesus. There is no reminiscence of Jahve's rest, but a curious mingling of Mosaism, Sun-worship, and Christianity, in the first explanation we have of the observance of the Sun-day by Christians. It is that of Justin Martyr (A.D. 147): "We all of us assemble together on the day of the Sun, because it is the first day, in which God changed darkness and matter, and made the world. On the same day also Jesus Christ our Saviour rose from the dead."

The Sabbath was as gloomy as the night over which the deity to whom it referred ruled, and the Day of the Sun was joyous. So it remains on the Continent of Europe to this day. But the reaction against Roman Catholic usages which followed the Reformation, the existence of the command about the Sabbath in the Decalogue, and a certain dismal element in the Anglo-Saxon man, combined to lead on the revival of Judaism known as Puritanism, and with it the blending of the Sunday with the Sabbath, notwithstanding the furious protests of Luther, Calvin, and the other Reformers. "If anywhere," cried Luther, "the day is made holy for the mere day's sake, — if anywhere anyone sets up its observance upon a Jewish foundation,—then I order you to work on it, to ride on it, to dance on it, to feast on it, to do anything that shall reprove this encroachment on the Christian spirit and liberty."

The Sabbath and the Sunday are as much remnants of old mythologies as the pixies. But they have not diminished in size like the pixies. It is indeed marvellous that the old Moon-deity is still strong enough in Great Britain to receive human sacrifices. Here are Baal (the Sun) and Ashtaroth (the Moon), with their idolaters in full power, and human health, happiness, and improvement bound as victims on their altars! Our Sabbatarians do not, like the Nestorian Christians, honestly fulfil the Jewish law, and kill the man who travels or works on Sunday; but they confine the people in their dens of filth or the gin-shop, and deprive them of the noble opportunities of their one free day. And, to complete the irony of the case, we send missionaries to the poor wretches who cast themselves under the Car of Juggernaut! The Car of Juggernaut may be as bad as a Scotch Sabbath,—

I have never seen it,—but it is hard to pass on Sunday by the reeking closes of Edinburgh, where the poor are barred in by superstition, and, from fields where the birds are singing and the sun shining, to look down upon the spires of that city, without seeing each shape itself to a horrid idol, with humanity wasting, as by a slow fire, before it.

We are, indeed, not so bad as that in England; nevertheless, the main body of the Sunday is here in the power of the idol, especially so far as the poor are concerned. The rich can go to the Zoological Gardens on Sunday. They can have their open libraries, pictures, music, and games at home. The clergy, disregarding—they, their servants, and their sextons—so much of the Commandment as does not suit them, find their pleasure on that day, well knowing that, under the law "Whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death," every one of them would have been stoned to death by the congregation of Israel. But although the law of England is so much more merciful than the law of England's God that men cannot be stoned to death, the Poor Man's Sunday is still a disgrace to our civilisation.

The Sunday question is a very large one. It concerns not only one-seventh of every human life, but the whole leisure time of labouring millions. To them destiny presents only so much release from drudgery and physical bondage. An ancient satirist represents a carpenter with his log of wood hesitating whether he shall make it into a god or a stool. England places every working man before his Sunday, and compels him to shape it to a Sabbatarian idol or a Satyr of the public-house. But what might not be made of this beautiful material! On that day Art might cast its ray across the dismal lot of Toil; the wonders of Science, the crystals of the Earth, the curiosities of History and Nature, the pictorial illustrations of human achievements, heroisms, and the celebrations of grand epochs, might kindle, refine, and ennoble those who now live and die as in caverns; they might count their higher, their real lives by luminous Sundays, remembering each as having brought them some new thought or uplifting ideal; they might sing, with George Herbert,

> The Sundays of man's life,
>   Threaded together on Time's string,
> Make bracelets to adorn the wife
>   Of the Eternal Glorious King!

But the pixy-spell is upon us, and it can be removed only by a complete change of our religious raiment inside out. To make that day what it should be involves a revolution in the fundamental ideas of religion. It would imply a belief in a deity detached from a book; in a living, and not a dead, deity; in a deity to whom every day belongs; in a deity not dependent for his happiness or equanimity upon human abasement before him. That every day is the Lord's Day, and that every human interest religiously sacrificed is offered to an idol, as much as if it were roasted meat offered to his palate or incense to his nostrils, is a transcendent faith to whose height we shall not so easily climb. The Sunday will follow the development of human faith: it has reflected the mystery of the changing Moon, it has invested the greatness of the Giant Mechanic who built the universe in six days, it has been abased before the power that swallowed up Pharaoh and his hosts, it has shone with the gladness of Apollo rising with his radiant chariot, it has followed the glooms and the glories of religion in its oscillations between fear and hope, heaven and hell; and when the religion of Humanity shall arrive, it will faithfully reflect the happiness and welfare of Man.

And because so much is implied in it, there is no cause that demands more the faithful service of the thinker and the philanthropist than that which demands the opening of museums, art-galleries, lecture-rooms, and concerts on the Sunday. That is a fatal servility that leads liberal believers to defer to the prejudices of neighbours and servants, and suspend games and pleasures on Sunday. Our neighbours and servants require our testimony against those chains which our timidity helps to strengthen. We have no right to set up in our homes, side by side, the God of Truth and our neighbour's idol. Our thought and our deed should be one. If a thing be false, let no true man or woman bend before it. If it be true, let it be organised in our homes and in our lives. It is but little, O my brothers, that we can do to lighten the superstitions that degrade and afflict mankind, —little enough at best; all the more should it be our very best!

XXIX.

OUR EUMENIDES.

Minerva. I have settled in this place these mighty deities, hard to be appeased; they have obtained by lot to administer all things regarding men. But he who has not found them gentle knows not whence come the ills of life.

Æschylus (*Erinnys*).

She saw
Through every world.

* * *

Thrice she was burnt,
Thrice she was born,
Oft, not seldom,
And yet she lives.

The Völuspâ.

OUR EUMENIDES.

ONE of them I saw driving, with snaky lash, a vast herd of miserable men, women, and children. She drove them by the palace-gates, past the splendid clubs, through noble parks. On her forehead was written *Pauperism.* The wretched ones passed by the Ministers of State driving in their carriages to Parliament, and, holding out their wasted arms, cried, "Help us to reach some land where we can find work and bread!" The Ministers said, "Be ye fed," and passed on. I followed, and saw many fall by the way and perish, and to all of these were distributed tracts "On the Goodness of God." As the human herd was driven on it became vaster, and others of the Eumenides came to help drive them; the name of one was CRIME, of another DISEASE, of yet another DRUNKENNESS. These drove them until they were lost in gin-shops, in hospitals, in work-houses, in fens and dens.

And I saw that when their work for the moment was done, ere repairing to find other wretched ones to pursue, the Eumenides were like each other: they were sisters; and all the daughters of IGNORANCE.

Why have not the poor work to do? While civilisation has multiplied the employments of intelligence and skill, it has diminished those of ignorance. We have educated iron and wood, fire and vapour, to do the work of the ignorant; but we have not educated men and women to do work on the higher plane where labour is more than ever demanded. Left in ignorance, the paupers are also without the restraints of culture and foresight, and their increase is like the spawning of the low animal orders. Nay, there would seem to be a fearful tendency in pauperism to stimulate sexual passions. In France the carp for breeding are kept from much food, and are called *peignards.* Thus ignorance begins the sad work which over-population completes.

And yet for all these hands there are waste places of the earth calling. Who can bring together the idle power and the idle land? Not a squirearchy desiring an ever-glutted labour-market; not a government which instinctively suspects any proposal that has the misfortune to be humane;—not these, though they saw England transformed to one vast city, with its woods, parks, open spaces—its very lungs—in atrophy! Not a Church which teaches the poor that this earth was meant to be the howling wilderness it is, and that their concern must be to avoid future, and not present, hells! Not the silly Samaritans whose cruel charities tempt the beggar to remain on the street, and who, in their pietistic care for the hypocrites who call themselves "the worthy poor," neglect those saddest victims of all, the devil's poor! Not the "Charities," with their endowments running through antiquated channels away from those they were meant to aid!

And yet there is no man or woman we meet in the street who would not turn aside and give his or her last shilling to save a fellow-creature from starving, if on that shilling it were certain life or death depended. With such resources of compassion all around them, the poor are starving; and for each one that actually starves, how many draw near to it! nay, how many whose death is ascribed to specific disease could have conquered that disease with sufficient nourishment, warmth, and care!

Is Crime not also the daughter of Ignorance? The crime against property is the grasp of the blindfolded after happiness. Those who really see the necessary inviolable conditions through which objects can be alone truly reached will not attempt the impossible plan. The preventing grace of Common Sense is enough to restrain men from putting ice under the pot they would have boil. Crimes of brutality and passion are but the natural effects of having wild animals running at large in society. When the tiger is four-footed, and the serpent in the dust, we understand them and provide cages; but when they come two-footed, in human guise, we raise no bar to their freedom. The gallows is a poor hole in the top of our kettle to escape the dangers of a force which, trained and mastered, would draw the freights of civilisation. The prison is our miserable apology for being less able to harness man-power than horse-power for beneficent ends. Saadi met a stranger seated on a tiger which bore him quietly; to him, paralysed with fear, the stranger said, "O Saadi, withdraw not thy neck from the yoke of God, and nothing shall be able to withdraw its neck from thy yoke." Every animal in field or jungle represents a special faculty; each has climbed into the heart and brain of man, that it may be our lowly saviour from some weakness or evil; Fatima has only to offer her hand, and her beast becomes a prince!

DISEASE is the very physiognomy of Ignorance. The mass of mankind are conceived in ignorance, and trained without knowledge. Did all the malformations of mind and heart inherited or fostered by the ignorant motherhood of the world appear in physical traits, the majority of people would be humped and crippled; as it is, to the ignorance of parents, to the stupidity of those who, as was once said, perpetually "throw drugs of which they know little into a body of which they know less," and to the general unreason which still does not recognise that every centre of disease sends out a ghoul to prey upon the whole body of Society, it is to be attributed that not only mankind, but their Theology and Politics, are in a condition of normal invalidism. Calvin's liver-troubles became organised into a body of divinity, Swedenborg's lunacy into Swedenborgianism; the Church Litany was the outcry of a people stricken by plague, pestilence, and famine. The clergyman's sore throat afflicts also his sermon. My Lords' gout tells in their legislation; and it is impossible not to perceive that the Irish Land Bill, the Education Bill, and other schemes are suffering from parliamentary late hours.

What shall we say of the direst Fury of all—DRUNKENNESS? It is heart-breaking to see the amount of earnestness, love, humanity, wasted (or nearly so) in the effort to rescue men from that evil. To men who have been created by stimulants, and whose every sense exists by its stimulant, the prohibitionists come with denunciation of stimulants. They would suppress public-houses in a world where in every growth—rice, sugar-cane, cocoa-nut, vine, palm, sycamore, walnut, banana, honey, every fruit—nay, the very grass!—Nature proffers the stimulating cup to human lips. Because of the sore-eyed, give up light! it cries. Avoid the basin, since thousands have been drowned in water! Have the weaknesses of reformed inebriates reappeared in this intemperate Temperance? "If a man strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully." The Russian Skopsi have a short method against sexual vice. We can put an end to the picking of pockets by a general amputation of hands. But a stream is not destroyed by foreclosing a particular channel.

To a great extent drunkenness has been mastered in the higher classes of society. Let any one compare the customs of respectable people in old times with those now prevailing. The ladies still leave the gentlemen at the table after dinner, but not now because those gentlemen are in a condition unfitting them for the society of ladies. Afternoon or evening marriages are still illegal, but not now because men of property are not supposed to know what they are about toward the close of the day. The old competition as to the number of bottles that can be poured into one human skin is past, and the gentleman is no longer normally to be looked for under the table. But what has produced this change? We commonly say, "civilisation," "general enlightenment," and so on: but these mean only that life has gained new resources; that art, science, literature, travel, intellectual occupations, have become rivals of the bottle; that there are many stimulants where all were once concentrated in one or two. Life to the educated becomes too rich in pleasures to be thrown away. The man who, amid the various resources now opened up, ruins himself or his fortunes by drink, is regarded as a fool.

But how is it with the impoverished and the ignorant? They are still under the doom of drudgery. The glass of gin still furnishes their only available paradise of forgetfulness. Their inward resources are unopened. Life is not so precious, passed in a den of filth, or on the treadmill of toil, that they should care much for its ruin. The drunken classes are the classes without hope. Now and then the man of genius is found ruining himself by indulgence in drink, but—except in certain hereditary cases—disappointment, inability to meet his ideal, have brought him to it; for there is a pauperism of soul as well as of body.

For the victims that have accumulated among us there should be inebriate asylums. The maddening adulterations should be surely curbed. The cheap wines, light fruit-waters, and pure beers, which secure soberness on the Continent of Europe, may easily be introduced into England, and they will be when a Chancellor of the Exchequer comes who can estimate the costliness of the revenue he obtains by taxing them. But the root of drunkenness will not be touched until the new resources of life which have sobered the educated and comfortable shall be within reach of the poor.

Thus we find that the Furies are sisters; when we know the cause and bearing of one evil, we know all of them. Where we have classes holding privileges and interests apart from the common welfare of mankind; mothers and wives trained to be social toys, rather than wise companions of men and instructors of children; Churches preaching the natural corruption of new-born babes, and the superior importance of some other world than this,—there shall we find the essential evil, that may fly from heart to head, from spirit to flesh, but will never be healed but by a general reform of the whole constitution of things.

Any reform which does not deal radically with human ignorance is as the sweeping away of this or that snow-drift while winter is yet in the sky and the snow still falling.

To us also, as to the wise Greeks, the Furies will be known as the Eumenides—"the well-meaning"—if they scourge us to the angels of which they are shadows.

* * *

XXX.

"GODLESS SCHOOLS."

That which makes our view of the present state of the world a source of perplexity and horror is the consideration that every human heart bears in itself a type, more or less distinct, of those powers and that happiness which have been the portion of the most exalted minds. There is perhaps no spot on earth, however dreary, in which the germs of many plants, and the larvæ of shining and light-winged insects, are not hidden, though for thousands of years undeveloped, and still expecting the warm breeze that shall call them out in life and beauty.

STERLING.

They stole the only wealth I had,—
Though poor and old, the sun, at least, was mine.

BÉRANGER.

"GODLESS SCHOOLS."

ONE morning, on the invitation of an Evangelical friend, I accompanied a deputation from the A.L.W.L. to the President of the Board of Trade. These mystic letters represent the Association for the Leavening of the Whole Lump. The Minister received us courteously, and, the interview having been opened with a prayer by the chaplain of the Association, the Chairman proceeded to explain the objects they had in view. The Society had been formed, he said, by a number of persons who had observed with sorrow the immoralities and infidelities of the world, and had come to the conclusion that they were due to the sad divorce that existed between the occupations of mankind and the Word of God. In the progress of society, men had been drawn to obtain many of their physical needs from common sources—but, alas, these sources were generally secular. We had godless bakeries, godless bootshops, and godless groceries. Was it any wonder that men who were thus, from the crown of their head to the soles of their feet, made up of unsanctified substances should be reprobates? The apostle had warned us that, whether we eat or drink, we should do so to the glory of God; yet how could this be the case so long as our workshops and markets are in their present unblest condition?

The chairman was followed by a baker, who said that nothing would be easier than to identify the bread of the body with the bread of life. He hoped to see the time when no loaf could be legally purchased which had not on it a text of Scripture; nay, was it too much to demand of the Parliament of a Protestant Christian People that on one side of every loaf should be stamped the words, "No Popery!" and on the other, for the good of Jews, "Christ-murderers!"? At present, even infidels are licensed to establish bakeries, and it is doubtful whether prayers are said over half the barrels of flour from which the people get their daily bread. Were it not better that families should have no bread at all than that they should thus destroy their souls for the sake of a mere physical existence?

A bootmaker said that all that the preceding brother had said of godless bakeries might refer equally to the godless boot-shops by which society is shod. He had been long deeply interested in the soles of men, and was convinced that the reason why so many tread the Broad Way that leadeth to

Destruction is, that their feet are encased in godless leather, instead of being shod with the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace. For himself, he had long used in the making of boots and shoes tracts printed by the Tract Society; but, such was the perversity of the human heart, his manufactures were even less popular than those of other shops. He thought the law might at least demand that only Protestant and orthodox Christians should be permitted to sell boots, and that the Lord's Prayer should be said over every customer before taking his measure.

Others present protested successively against godless breweries, groceries, barber-shops, &c., and the scandal that we should be kept in order by a godless police was vehemently denounced.

The Minister promised to give the weighty matter which the deputation had at heart his very best consideration, and bowed us to the door, to which the Dean our Chaplain advanced backwards, invoking the divine blessing upon the Board of Trade.

Who this godly man was I did not learn at the time, but have since concluded that it was the Dean of Norwich; for very soon after I read in the papers that a meeting held to consider the subject of education had been startled by an opinion expressed by that divine to the effect that, "though secular education may promote civilisation, civilisation is not evangelisation nor christianisation."

Had the meeting been called to consider how the hovels of the poor might be cleansed, the same profound mind would no doubt have ventured the declaration that cleanliness is not godliness, and insisted that there should be no bathing but baptism.

Or the chaplain may have been the clergyman whom I heard append to the maxim that parents have no more right to starve their children's minds than to starve their bodies, the declaration that they had just as little right to starve their children's souls as to starve their minds or bodies,—in sublime oblivion of the fact that, while we agree about the nature of bread, and the nature of reading and writing, what one thinks food for the soul another believes to be poison.

The English people have compared the statistics of every crime with the statistics of ignorance, and have been brought face to face with the fact that the training of children in ignorance is really the crippling of their energies, the corruption of their morals; and that, in the presence of facts that amount to national disgrace, right and duty compel the State to see that every child is educated. The children being those of Catholics, Jews, Rationalists, and Protestant Christians, it follows plainly that compulsory schools which they are all taxed to support cannot in justice teach what either regards as harmful. England has not the right to compel the Catholic child to listen to the reading of the Protestant Bible, nor the Jewish child to learn of the New Testament; nor to insist that the child of the Rationalist shall be taught that Balaam's ass spoke. It may be done, but it is unjust; and the scheme incorporating it must suffer—as it is now suffering in America—the fate of all injustice. The alliance of the oppressed against a wrong, and the overthrow of that wrong, is only a question of time.

This simple position is met by an outcry against "godless schools." But to some among us every school must be godless. The denominational schools of England are godless to all who do not believe in the god they have set up. Trinitarian, Unitarian, Calvinist, Jew, worship deities as different as Brahm, Allah, and Jesus. But they all agree that men should know how to read, write, count, and comprehend the principles of honesty, justice, veracity, and benevolence. The teaching of any special form of religion is technical, and one man has the same right to tax me to turn his son out an accomplished Positivist, that another has to tax me to make his son a Christian.

The question is, can we by coöperation extend our means so as to secure to every child the education that each finds good for his own, whatever be the profession, trade, or religion to which he desires him to belong? If we cannot separate the general education which all require from the special religious teaching which some desire, it only proves that such coöperation is impossible. But it is no solution to say that we must pay to have our neighbours' children taught what we are unwilling to have our own taught. It is to add meanness to injustice to invite us to be satisfied with keeping our children from school while the Bible is being read or the religion we believe false is taught; as would be felt even by orthodox obtuseness if every Christian in England were taxed for the propagation of Brahminism in India. A man can partly counteract an error taught his own child, but he is gravely asked to consent to aid in propagating what he holds to be falsehood beyond his power of control or remedy!

I do not wonder at the horror which the orthodox have of "godless schools." Their misgivings are quite natural. It may be safely assumed that, when human minds are reared under the simple rain and light of knowledge, the results will not be what they have been under the manipulations of priests. When the working man has learned to cast an eye of intelligence into nature, it will be unlikely enough that he will find in sun or moon the god of Calvin, or in the blue sky or green earth suggestions of the lake of fire and brimstone. It has required a great deal of special instruction to lead mankind to believe the popular theology, and it is not without a certain satisfaction that the freethinker welcomes the admission that minds may be trained to explore all actual knowledge without finding any basis for the Thirty-nine Articles or the Westminster Catechism. Nor need the freethinker conceal his consent that the fears of the orthodox are founded on truth. He knows that the cry for education, which is the arch of light spanning the cloud of misery and vice around us, will not vanish before its promise is fulfilled. Its meaning is that Superstition is to be lifted from the hearts and minds of this people, and its end may be secured by the devious no less surely than by the direct path. It is not *his* cause that need fear the turning of Town Councils into religious debating clubs, the struggle in every village over the religion to be taught in schools, the boring of children by Bible-readings and catechisms. It is the season that is in the sky which decides whether the falling rain shall turn to ice or flowers. The spirit and tendency of this age will determine the effect of the application of a permissive Act of Uniformity to compulsory education. The secularist lecturer has his reasons for carrying the Bible in his pocket as well as the clergyman; and his interpretation of it will not suffer by its appearance as a badge of religious oppression. For the reading of the Scriptures of a particular religion, in schools supported by taxation of those who disbelieve that religion, can only be regarded as an oppression. It is not contended that there are not Bibles enough for all who desire them, and opportunities to have the same read to the children of those who look upon the English Bible as the Word of God. To bring it, therefore, into the common schools is to clothe the teacher so far with the functions of a priest, and to raise a sectarian flag, and with it all the jealousies and suspicions of opposing creeds, over the school which should be dear to all as their own home. And because a school does not do this, but bears to all the light they need, undiscoloured by the symbols which have caused the religious wars of history, to call it godless is to say a great deal for Atheism. If it be godless, so are the fountain and the sunshine.

XXXI.

THE GOD WITH THE HAMMER.

It was revealed unto me: What other men trample on shall be thy food.

GEORGE FOX.

Action translates death into life, fable into verity, speculation into experience; freeing man from the sorceries of tradition and the torpor of habit. The eternal Scripture is thus expurgated of the falsehoods interpolated into it by the supineness of the ages.

ALCOTT.

The question is not: Art thou
 In the nobility?
This is the question: Is there
 Nobility in thee?

GLEIM.

THE GOD WITH THE HAMMER.

FRESH from visiting the St. Pancras Arches —the Mars Hill of London, above whose altar to the Unknown God I had seen sitting Science, Poetry, Literature, and Art—I found my way into the Strangers' Gallery of the House of Commons. As I listened to the debate there were suddenly "roars of laughter." In a moment of forgetfulness some statesman had alluded to the English people as "our own flesh and blood." Had he got hold of that skeleton of Tom Paine which infidels are said to be keeping somewhere, and dangled it before the club of wealthy gentlemen, he could not have been more scoffed. And why should not Parliament, as then constituted, laugh at the idea that the masses were of one flesh and blood with its honourable members? One cannot get in the woof what was not put into the web, nor of privilege and class interest obtain the recognition of Humanity.

The cachinnation passed out of Westminster

Hall, and went sounding through the country. It came into collision with some sounds of quite a different kind,—with the voices, now plaintive, now jubilant, of sufferers soothed and healed in the asylums of charity; with the appeals of Leagues against every form of wrong and degradation; with the triumphant songs of millions liberated in America; with the burden of ancient faith, which has come down over many laughing Parliaments, concerning man, "Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour!" All these contrary voices, with which the laughter came into hard collision, some of us could hear in the gallery, and we looked down with some anxiety on those below, who seemed not to hear them. There seemed, however, to be one ear keener than the rest among them, for an individual, amid much derision, uttered the following brief speech, which I must give from memory, as I have not been able to find it in any newspaper, nor in Hansard. He said:—

"Amid what revolutionary smoke and flame—mountain blazing to mountain—have been published the Rights of Man! How dim must the parliamentary eye have become to which all the war-fires of English histo have not furnished light enough by which to read on every man the charter of his rights! Does a stomach imply food; a hand, work; lungs, air; exhaustion, rest; intellect, culture; conscience, moral freedom; hope, happiness? Does he who, with a mind that might be improved, must pass through life with his talent buried in the earth, suffer no wrong? Why is light given to a man whose way is hid? Are hope, aspiration, capacity for delight,—found in every wretchedest man in London, as in the most fortunate, even as bone answers to bone in the two,—are these but ingenious schemes to add the torture of Tantalus to the routine of Ixion? If a Devil be not at the head of this Universe, then man is marked all over with his rights; and in manifold hideous vices, corruptions, sufferings,—in the nameless ghouls that batten on youth and beauty in our streets,—in false weights and measures, political dishonour, social coarseness and frivolity,—in the inability of the best men and women to be more than fragments of themselves,—in the chimpanzee chatter of churches and chapels, and the universal inoculation of Jesuitism,—Society is suffering the retributions of those who have denied the mass of men their divinely-certified rights. The most fearful hell Swedenborg found was perhaps that whose occupants fancied they were in heaven, and sang praises for their happiness. As I remember, Swedenborg began seeing his visions in London, a region in which men may still be heard thanking God for Jerusalems that are really Gehennas. But mark you, gentlemen, no Parliament which has only shouts of derision for those who speak of the toiling people around us as our own flesh and blood—"

Here the laughter burst out again to such an extent that the speaker could not proceed. As he sat down a heavy blow, as from a tremendous mallet, was given to the door, which fell before it, and in there stalked a huge stern man with a hammer in his hand.

As he glanced around on the assembly, the laughter sank to what sounded very much like a death-rattle. With a voice of thunder, the grim intruder spake as follows:—

"There came a day when Odin, 'the terrible and severe god, the Father of Slaughter, he who giveth victory and reviveth courage in the conflict, who nameth those that are to be slain,'—founder thus of the Age of Chivalry which shaped Europe, —became weary and dejected, and, resting on his sword, which was also his sceptre, asked—'Cannot Love be as well as Hate, Life as well as Death?' Then he called Thor, his first-born son, and set a crown upon his head; but when Thor asked for the sword, Odin gave into his hand in lieu thereof a hammer, saying, 'The Kingdom of the Destroyer is necessary, but brief; the Kingdom of the Builder shall never end.' Thenceforth in the centre of every globule of Northern blood sat enthroned the ideal—Man fulfilling his twofold destiny as labourer and god.

"The Southern and Oriental formulas into which the Anglo-Saxon race has been coerced for a few centuries cannot destroy this throne. When the spasmodic effort to obtain things by genuflexion and lip-service, whereinto we have been galvanised, has passed away, and the worship which is work prevails, and it is known that Luck is the veritable Loki whose evil progeny Thor destroys, that all things are attainable through fulfilment of their intervening conditions, and only thus attainable,—then the god with the hammer, too real to care whether he be called carpenter's son or by other title, will have fulfilled the destiny assigned him by the All-Father.

"For a long time the Wolf Fensir, the Serpent Midgard, prevail over Thor. The labourer knows no further than to cross himself, or whine psalm-tunes, and pay his Peter's pence. The man whose daily life is a grapple for life and death with the laws of Nature knows nothing of those laws, such knowledge being reserved for those who never come in any perilous contact with gravitation or explosive gases. The wheels of our progress are splashed with their blood. Opie, the artist, explained to a questioner concerning his wonderful colours, 'I mix them with my brains.' Poor Paddy has reversed the case, and mixes his brains with the materials. As we drive over our roads, our waggons rattle on his brains; the train speeds on iron that has entered his soul; and whenever any great work is undertaken—as the tunnelling of a mountain, or the building of a bridge or church—instead of the bulls and sheep the ancients used to sacrifice on similar occasions, we offer up a hecatomb of Irishmen.

"For these miserable ones, for whom the universe holds no relief but the cup of gin and the begetting or conceiving children wretched as themselves, what hope? None, unless the capitalist can be made to feel that he is doling out pitiful and unjust wages, not to Sullivan or to Smith, but to Almighty God; no hope, unless his eye can be quickened to see beyond the uncouth body and brutal brow a soul of quite infinite stature, a flower of God's heart,—by no means a weed, though drest for a while in weeds,—crowned with the light of an eternal destiny. No matter how long it has been sepulchred, even if until it stinketh, the Christ of this age has no higher work than to cry to that entombed Thought, 'Come forth! Unbind him hand and foot; take away the napkin which shuts away from those dull eyes the everlasting stars of truth!' We do not say he should not roll your hogshead, we only demand that he shall not be nailed up body and soul in your hogshead. We only ask that you shall not take him, whose only crime is that he is ever coining his heart and brain for the capitalist, and set him in this world for ever at the

Criminal's Pump, where, at any minute's cessation from drudgery, the water rises to the drowning-point. We demand that study shall be no longer made to him synonymous with starvation.

"Does anyone believe the present relations between Capital and Labour can endure? They will endure just as long as the labourer is imbruted, and does not know his own worth.

"Think what Capital is. It is sinews and nerves in metallic forms; it is accumulated head-aches and heart-aches of drudges, sempstresses, servants; it is a catacomb of human bones. Your pound sterling represents so much labour—that is its only value.

"Think what Labour is. It is the one thing valuable: without it your bread is field-dust; your butter, grass. Take it away from your ship, and, lo! you are a savage swimming on a log; from your fine dwelling, and you must burrow like a mole for every stone in it.

"So long as Labour holds in unconsciousness the keys of the gateways to all good, it will be cheated as were the Red Indians, who were easily enticed to sell states for glass beads. But the Titans will not slumber for ever. The poor-school, the penny press, have not been so unproductive as some suspect. That man should be a hammer without the added god can never be the perpetual fact of Society. Therefore the hammer STRIKES.

"In the Laws of Menu it is written: 'Justice, being destroyed, will destroy; being preserved, will preserve: it must therefore never be violated.' The Hebrew prophet cried: 'I will come near to you in judgment: I will be a swift witness against those that oppress the hireling in his wages.' Wages? A *wage* is a *gauge* or measurement of work done. It does not mean that he who sows, plants, picks, lifts, drives, polishes, spins, weaves, and thus transforms dust and dirt to beauty and commodity, shall have a thousandth part of what accrues to him who shelters these transactions, but never sees them until they shine in his purse or his mansion. And because a false balance is an abomination to the Lord, and because, 'when God loathes aught, men presently come to loathe it too,' the present relation of Capital and Labour cannot stand. Nemesis has yet her wheel and rudder for sea and land, and trade is everywhere pursued by the Law that underpaid labour is the dearest; as the poor iron-forger put it, where there is cinder in the pay, there is cinder in the iron. When we think we have been very clever, and saved much, our ship is going to pieces, our train is smashed on broken rails, we are eating, drinking, and thinking taint and disease. The labourers, going downward, not only drag us with them, but manage, by pauperism and other atrocities, to filch back the very money we move Heaven and Earth to save. The pauper stops the way. The criminal stands there steadily and painfully extracting from the hide of us what the hand has refused. Nay, there is something mysteriously passing from our heart as well as from our hide. 'Who is weak,' cried Paul, 'and I am not weak?' The Queen hears that three men have starved to death in one week, and writes to her Minister that she feels that thereby her reign has been sullied.

"Mr. John Ruskin—the noble spirit of whose works on social questions will survive their incidental crudities, as Luther's heart survives his notions about consubstantiation and the devil—has recently advanced the opinion that the radical vice of all political economy is that it rests on the principle that the only true estimate of the value of labour is what that labour can be bought for. If the labour-market is over-full, then labour will be cheap, and *vice versâ*. But Mr. Ruskin maintains that where a labourer is employed to do so much or so many hours' work, his just wage is what will exactly repair his expenditure of physical energy, and the number of cubic feet in sheltered space requisite for his healthy lodging. The question, he maintains, is really a chemical one, to be properly decided by a medical commission.

"It is far easier to pronounce this absurd than to prove it so. It at least demands as much for a man as for a steam-engine, which will strike work for ever unless it be fed with precisely the amount of force it puts forth. But the fatal vice of the theory is, that no medical commission could measure the working man's expenditure on his work. The labourer is more than a working man; he is also a man working. After his loss of physical energy has been restored, what chemistry is there that can measure or repair his loss in not being able to know his wife and child, to enjoy a home, to give one thought to the sacred Universe around him? What medicinal art can distil for him the intellectual life absorbed from his hours by the sod, or recover for the brain its glories lavished upon the satisfaction of an animal's wants? First, indeed, man is a machine worked by so much heat; but next he is a great spiritual hunger, which will take the fruit it craves from the Serpent if its God deny the same.

"But the day will come when thinking men will do honour to the man who proposed that the poor should be not only paid, but 'considered;' and who would fain have substituted for the mere buying and selling of human sinews and hearts a standard of value which should respect—albeit, on the mere physical plane—the individual need of each man. Here, at least, is a strain of the old Love that hears the young ravens when they cry.

"When the hammer of Thor was held by the giant Thrym, and buried eight miles beneath the gelid rocks of Jötunheim, it was only through Freyja, Goddess of Love, that it could be regained. The fable grew out of our race, and we live to make it history. It is by the working of a Mighty Love—a Love that cannot find repose amid the declined tasks of humanity even by bestowing seven millions of pounds annually in charity—that Labour is to be recovered from the icy oppressions of Selfishness, unearthed from hard necessities, and made the beautiful service of a divinity."

When the man with the hammer had finished, he took his seat in the House without resistance; for the laughter of Parliament over the flesh-and-blood joke had indeed ended in a death-rattle.

XXXII.

THE PILGRIM'S LAST REFLECTIONS.

The Nurakh sages ask, What use is there for a prophet in this world? A prophet is necessary because men are connected with each other in the affairs of life: therefore rules and laws are indispensable, that all may act in concert, that there may be no injustice in giving or taking or partnership, but that the order of the world may endure. And it is necessary that these rules should proceed from God, that all men may obey them.

THE PERSIAN DESATIR.

All made in the likeness of the One,
All children of one ransom,
In whatever hour, in whatever part of the earth,
We draw this vital air,
We are brothers; we must be bound by one compact:
Accursed he who infringes it,
Who raises himself upon the weak who weep,
Who saddens an immortal spirit.

MANZONI.

THE PILGRIM'S LAST REFLECTIONS.

AFTER all, one of those gentlemen so recently employed by the upper classes to laugh down the rights of man in Parliament might not be without something to say for himself. "You have the majority, it is true," he might say; "so had Herod and Pilate when they joined hands. But I know that one with Truth is a more real majority. The rights of man? Read the statistics of false measures, the statistics of gin and beer; walk through St. Giles's with your pockets shut tight and your eyes wide open; visit the police court; watch the crowd gathered about the prize-ring; and tell me what you think of their sacredness. How would you like such people to make laws for you? Linger a little under the arches at St. Pancras, and listen to the religious ranters; then put it to the vote of the assembly what shall be your creed."

Lately I read the legend of a youth caught up in the air by an angel, with whom he floated over the world, that he might see the whole of it. The angel went too near the stars for him. "Let us go lower," said the youth; "I love the earth." The angel went lower—near enough for him to see the outlines of continents. "Lower yet!" said the youth; "I love the smell of the earth, its scented trees and grass; and the bright ships, the fishermen, are dearer to me than hemispheres and continents." So the angel went lower still. But now they saw sad scenes: a poor slave and his wife pursued by blood-hounds; they saw them plunge in the river, hand in hand, to find freedom in death. They saw an army besieging a city; shot and shell bore death among women kneeling with babes in their arms. The city falls; the survivors are given over to the cruelty and lust of the victorious soldiery. They saw the dens of cities where the human image is seared out of men and women by vice. And now the young man's wings began to droop. "Higher, higher!" he cried to the angel. "I have seen enough—too much; let us soar higher!" "Nay, not so," replied the angel; "thou hast seen, not too much, but too little; we must go lower." Then, lowering their wings, they skimmed the earth like swallows, and they saw men and women coming from far and near to break every fetter of the slaves whose cry they had heard; they saw hovering near the pillaged city a host with white banners binding up the wounded, warring upon war; and amid the dens of vice they saw busy workers building schools, asylums, hospitals; nay, even amid the wretched and vile they found many heroically vanquishing the dangers and temptations of their hard lot, and, coming closer still, saw tints of kindliness and feeling in tainted hearts,—in all, the hope and prophecy of a fairer destiny.

May it not be that our philosophers and politicians also too generally come but close enough to see the outlines of nations, or the aggregates of populations?

A FINE lady once refused to purchase a picture she had ordered of the French painter Millet, because by the side of a gardener in it, pruning his vines, there was a basket of manure. She saw not that it was a basket of lilies, nay, a basket of roses for the cheeks of the gardener's children in the cottage hard by. Lord Palmerston did not say many things one cares to remember; but he did once remind us that "dirt is but matter out of its place."

The philosophical opponents of democracy are not apt in these days to undervalue men because they are lowly. Their fault is that they cannot see in crime energy "out of place," nor lilies in the dung of animalism. So far as the honest and ignorant workers are concerned, they say—"But the whole power and value of this ploughman is that he shall stick to his plough. The democrats would carry him to the hustings, where he is instantly transformed to a clod." But the democrat disclaims that his movement is theoretical. Democracy is the withdrawal of authority from those whose use of it is shown to be worse than anarchy. "Mud-turtles we, the people, may be; but science has shown us how close is the creeping reptile to the soaring bird, and there is enough of the wing-principle in us to enable us to detect a fish pretending to be an eagle or a ploughman trying to be a peer. We shall follow with devotion true leaders when they come: our democracy means that we discharge the pretenders who stand in the way of real and authentic representatives and rulers. We fearlessly lay the axe to the root of the tree that cumbers the ground, with full faith in the vitality of the earth, and the human seed, and the unfailing seasons, which know when leaves must rot to feed the germs of future growths."

DEMOCRACY in America has shown itself to have been the effort of Society to pass from an arbitrary to a natural classification. No sooner has the last vestige of the unreal aristocracy disappeared with the slave-holding class, than Radicalism starts forward with the demand for an educational qualification in the suffrage. To demand that every voter shall be able to read is little, but when readers alone are electors the standard must ascend.

CAN any good thing come out of Nazareth? The carpenter's son comes to make our old mud-ball blossom with divine glory; Homer passes, singing ballads for bread, and unconsciously opening the fountains of a river that shall refresh every intellectual growth of Europe; Mohammed writes on palm-leaves and the shoulder-blades of sheep the sacred chants on which nine thousand millions of souls shall float heavenward; Luther comes from forging iron to melt Europe in his heart-furnace and pass it into a new mould; Shakespeare comes from a farmhouse on the byway and creates a new literature; Burns follows the plough till its share reaches to the heart of humanity, and imperishable harvests of thought and beauty mark where he has trod;—yet still the world lifts its eyes beyond the insignificant Nazareths, and looks for help to the next descendant of Solomon and the chief synagogue-seats of Jerusalem.

And, in sooth, Nazareth cannot produce the conventional great man. The man it sends out is one whom the world suffers because it must. But who would willingly trust his son to the hard training or the visionary aims of the Judæan street preacher? Our common standards are conventional, and any departure from them is, in the vast majority of households, thought of only with dread. Even our great men, who have gained their strength from struggles with poverty and disparagement, are anxious to shield their own children from graduation in the same rough University, and virtually consecrate them to the conventional idols. There probably has never been a great thinker, poet, or scholar, from whom some tributary of power might not be traced back to where it was held in a brain or character formed amid the humble realities and the discipline of manual labour. Yet perhaps the best relation between them and the lowly workers may be that expressed by Heine: "I love the people, but I love them at a distance. I have always battled for the emancipation of the people—that has been the business of my life; still, in the hottest moments of the fight I have shrunk from the least contact with the masses."

THERE are, indeed, two vicious extremes of Society—two corresponding classes—from whom little is to be hoped: the agricultural labourers, reduced by ignorance, drudgery, and servility to a colourless mass of stupidity;

and those whom hereditary wealth and generations of luxurious idleness have rendered almost equally characterless and brainless. But of the classes between these—the artisan and the middle class—there is no reason to think that less is to be anticipated from the training of the former than from that of the latter, in their respective bearing upon the political or intellectual development of the country. The artisan is the intimate neighbour of fact and reality. Theories and fancies will not hammer his iron or hew his stone. Every stroke of his arm translates the law of cause and effect. The superstition of the savage, that he absorbs the strength of the foe he slays, is fulfilled for this wrestler with the hardness of nature. The crude thing moulded to his will prints its history on the character. Patience, Perseverance, Courage, Necessity, form the habit of his mind. No insincerity or trick can serve in his struggle; in every case so much real effect answers the like real force put forth. He is independent, too; his capital is in his hand, and he has not mortgaged his opinions for an estate or a family name. His creed is, perhaps unconsciously for the present, *Laborare est orare.* Such qualities must be, in whatever crude form, mixed with the artisan class like the aluminium diffused in clay, or stretching like veins of marble and metal through the stratum to which the artisan belongs. The gold slept in California for a long time before the miners came. But can human society go on with its shams and formalisms, its shreds of Red Tape for politics, and its puppet-show religions, for want of just those real and practical qualities which are stored up in the common people? Shall we long prefer cobwebs to words of iron and steel?

EVERYWHERE our thinkers, dreamers, poets, are recognising in the people an as yet unconstituted Court of Appeal. He who has an idea not yet received is sustained by the belief that mankind will ultimately give it due embodiment. The visionary, looking to the people, sees of the travail of his soul, and is satisfied. The reformer, the martyr, know well that the coarseness of the masses is superficial and temporary; their ultimate justice is certain.

WHO shall be the Man of the People?

Will Democracy, as some apprehend, abolish great men? Will it raise the mass and lower the individual? Are we to pay the splendid exceptional names for the more intelligent aggregate, and bring down the mountain summits to fill up the valleys?

No doubt certain kinds of distinction may pass away before the elevation of the people. Already it seems doubtful if the West can see another Wellington or another Napoleon I. It requires warlike ages to produce such men; and such ages require peoples capable of being thoroughly drilled and massed. The development of individual opinion, the evolution of personal interests, tend to discussion, arbitration, therefore to peace. That crowns must be lowered needs no proof. Already it is not for the opinions of the Royal Heads of England, Prussia, or Austria, that men care, but for those of Gladstone, Bismarck, Von Beust. The one crown which stood out above ministries is being lowered. And as crowns sink into mere ornaments, aristocracies also, resting upon accidental, not real, advantages, must fade away. The diplomatist, too, —*διπλόος*, or double-faced man, that is,—can hardly be a hero again. The people have uttered no very loud cry for duplicity as yet. We can well spare such eminences. There was a mysterious period in the history of our planet which seems to have demanded things that swam about like animate islands, or stalked through forests, thirty feet high in their claws. When the time drew nigh that they should disappear, no doubt they met in conclave, and deplored that, under the levelling tendencies of Nature, they were to be reduced; and contempt enough probably was heaped upon a poor little two-legged animal, only five or six feet high, beginning to compete for forest and swamp with megalosaurians of position and of ancient families. Cæsar, Charlemagne, Napoleon, Wellington, Talleyrand, Palmerston,—what are they beside the brain of the Stratford poacher and London play-writer? They are subjects for the palæontologist of history.

But will the elevation of the people tend to reduce the salient summits of human character and genius?

Let a graduated scale be made of the comparative degree to which in all countries the people have been admitted to power, and the scale will stand as well for the comparative number of distinguished philanthropists and literary men in the same.

How many poets under the Tsar? How many men of science under the Pope?

America, as yet in her babyhood, has already produced finer thinkers than Austria can reckon at the end of her centuries. Nor are there any names in America of which the people are more proud than those of Franklin, Emerson, Motley, Irving, Hawthorne, Lowell, Whittier, Longfellow, Channing, Phillips, and Theodore Parker. These men were or are men of the people, and not one of them has ever been a reactionist against the cause of human equality.

The Man of the People is to come out of the heart of the people, and be related to it. He shall inherit their integral force. All the darkly-stored elements of the coal-seam shall shine out in that diamond. It seems very long ago now since Democracy was answered,—"The coarse will elect the coarse, the ignorant choose ignoramuses; each will vote for the man who most reflects his own baseness or prejudice." Yes, long ago; for since then the masses have been heard shouting for Mill, applauding Carlyle along the streets of Edinburgh; the Laureate must hide from their enthusiasm; they crowd the halls where Dickens reads, or Stanley preaches, or Huxley lectures. They have been sending the House of Commons its chief literary men. It is Oxford that rids itself of "that damned intellect:" it is vulgar Greenwich which receives and sustains the most scholarly Prime Minister England ever had. And the thinkers for whom the people have shown most enthusiasm are, in nine cases out of ten, those who have vigorously confronted popular errors and superstitions.

The Man of the People must be the interpreter of their hearts, not the smooth reflector of the dismal outside of them which they are ashamed of, and are clamouring for teachers to help them get rid of. He shall be genuine, at least, as they; not uttering cheap applause of things accepted, but words costly as Luther's or Knox's, to speak which is as genuine and perilous work as that of the miner underground. However fine or transcendent, the great man henceforth must be the son of his time, bearing upon him the burden of its sins and afflictions; without compliance; not by any means doing his work for the past, or for posterity. If Jesus had gone 1800 years backward to find his work, we should probably hear as little of him now as the future will of the stupid brother who occupies the bright Sunday morning with his master's fulminations against the Pharisees. We get even less from those who fancy unborn generations will be dependent on their speculations. The men of past days who serve us even now were they whose work was put forth to meet the human need before them, by the same laws that, by steady adaptation of means to ends, gave each insect its antennæ, and man his faculties; which now in other spheres must translate the law by which they have been formed into a method of work, if they would do anything of real or permanent value. That which is done for this hour, and in its light, other hours may not recognise, but will surely feel. The "Coming Man" will, like Homer, sing his song to his villagers. He will be related to his time and country as hook to eye. The proverb of dwellers amid deserts is, "He who digs a well or plants a grove is sure of heaven."

"Things are not what they seem," says the poet. Things are oftener the reverse of what they seem, adds the man of science. Our fathers said the sun moved round the earth—we know the earth moves round the sun. They said the earth is flat—we

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know it to be of the form farthest from flatness. They said the sky is solid, a firmament—we know it to be the thinnest of fluids. But in the moral, more than in the external, world, the actual knowledge of the present is diametrically opposite to the superficial impressions of pre-scientific ages. A salient instance is the change in the estimate of man. Great men have, indeed, in every age recognised the worth of man. The Hebrew poet saw him as one crowned by the Deity with glory and honour, and Paul saw him to be "the temple of the living God." Mencius said, "He who knows his nature, knows heaven;" Plato said, "He who knows himself, knows all things in himself;" and Socrates did but translate the Greek word *ανθρωπος* in saying, "There is a natural love of wisdom in the mind of man:" preparing the way thus for Hermes' sentence, "Man is a mortal God," and the warning of the Theurgists, "On beholding yourself, fear!" "The intelligible Deity is understood with the flower of the intellect," said Zoroaster. And, indeed, there is no man who has seriously influenced mankind, who has not lived and thought under a sense of the grandeur of man. But the summit of human nature requires a mind large enough to create the perspective necessary for seeing it. The average mind, impaled by the care of the moment, its eye riveted to the foreground, sees but the coarse surface of mankind, and holds their nature cheap and vile. Thus all religions are infected with the contempt of man, and the majority are based upon the belief in his degradation. The Ark can be touched only by the few anointed ones. The Eleusinian Mysteries could not begin until the priest had cried, "Hence, ye profane !" Jesus gave the sop to Judas; but the Catechumens said, "Holy things to holy men." It was not difficult to imagine such wretched creatures being damned by the million.

Whether it was because the East swarmed with superfluous populations at a time when in the West every man counted for something, or because of the inherent genius of the German people, certain it is, that the common people in Northern Europe were always held in esteem, if not reverence. They related that the daughter of a giant came to her father's castle with something folded in her apron. "What hast thou there?" asked the giant. "A beautiful plaything which I found crawling about in a field." With that she took from her apron a peasant with his plough and oxen. The giant said sternly, "Go, put those creatures back where thou didst find them. If the dwarf folk laboured not in the valley, it would fare ill with the giants in the mountain."

It is not a little droll to see the religion based on contempt and denial of man half digested by the race which produced such a fable as this. What competition to gather in these totally-depraved wretches! What endless societies to seek and save the men and women whom God holds so merely damnable! Millions of money shall go to provide that every perishing pauper shall at least starve with a tract in his hand, and that the savage of the South Seas, though he eat his missionary, shall at least be induced to say Christian grace over him. Nay, every theory, philosophy, doctrine, leaps into the arena, crying, "My kingdom for a majority!"

THERE is but one institution which has not shared the general tendency and passion for the recovery and elevation of the poor —the Christian Church. While clamorous for their allegiance, it sees unmoved that very class to which Jesus belonged, to follow which to the hill-sides he abandoned the Churches of his time, wandering shepherdless on the bleak rocks of Atheism. "Artisan" is fast becoming in England another name for infidel, as "turner" already is in Germany. The alienation of the people from the Church is, indeed, no new thing; but it is now for the first time that a Tribunal has been formed able to hear and decide on the case of the ignorant and the poor against the false Shepherds. That Tribunal has been formed by the increased humanity of every department of human interest except the Church. Government, Science, Literature, Art, Social Philosophy, absorbed in the problem of human welfare, turn now, and say of the one institution that to the cry for bread offers a dogmatic stone, "Why cumbereth it the ground?"

It is but natural that the gardeners should petition for time in which to dig about the barren tree, and try to make it bear fruit; but how can we hope for such a result when the very life has ebbed away from its roots? Time was when the leading thought and scholarship were in the Church; now their pulpit is the magazine, the daily press, the hall of science, Parliament. How can the Churches guide the people, when all their sermons for a year cannot gain as much attention as a single lecture by Professor Tyndall on Dust?

The Church might, indeed, be left to the processes of natural decay, were it not occupying the place where a true Church might stand, giving to starving souls those solutions of their doubts which thinkers have gained for themselves in their solitudes, but are now without the means of bringing to bear on the dismal riot of unbelief and despair. When men are drowning, they who cannot save must at least not be permitted to use the life-boats for pleasure excursions.

AND now to you, O freethinkers, liberals, emancipated souls, the Pilgrim utters this his final word.

We have deeply learned that God is our Father! we need to feel as deeply that every man is our brother. Who of you, if his own son or brother were the victim of some delusion that darkened life, would spare effort to relieve him of it? Yet all around us are the children of our common Father tossed from the delusion that God is a Tyrant to the delusion that there is no God at all. As we look into the past, we see what men have done for the love of Christ,—what they have surrendered and endured in their misdirected zeal and passion for him whom they adored as a Saviour. As much as they loved the dead, let us love the living Christ—Humanity. Surely Truth and Spiritual Liberty should not have less power to animate and inspire, or to command sacrifices, than Superstition!

There is a story of the Holy Grail which the Laureate has passed by, but which we may remember. In the days when men wandered through the world seeking that cup, made of a single precious stone, holding the real blood of Christ, a Knight left England to search for the same in distant lands. As he passed from his door, a poor sufferer cried to him for help. Absorbed in his grand hope, the Knight heeded him not, but went on. He wandered to the Holy Land, fought in many wars, endured much, but found not the precious cup; and at last, disappointed and dejected, he returned home. As he neared his own house, the same poor sufferer cried to him for help. "What dost thou require?" asked the Knight. The aged man said, "Lo, I am perishing with thirst." The Knight dismounted and hastened to fetch a cup of water. He held the half-clad sufferer in his arms, raised his head, and proffered the water to his parched lips. Even as he did so the cup sparkled into a gem, and the knight saw in his hand the Holy Grail, flushed with the true blood of Christ. And you, my brothers, may wander far, and traverse many realms of philosophy and theology, to find the truth which represents the true life-blood of the noblest soul; but you shall find it only when and where you love and serve as he did. If you can but give to the fainting soul at your door a cup of water from the wells of truth, it shall flash back on you the radiance of God. As you can save, so shall you be saved. And be you sure that when you are really moved by the outcries of famished hearts and brains, as by the wailings of helpless babes,—when you deeply long to bear light and hope to men,—the ways of doing so will open before you, even as undreamed energies to fill them full shall be born within you.

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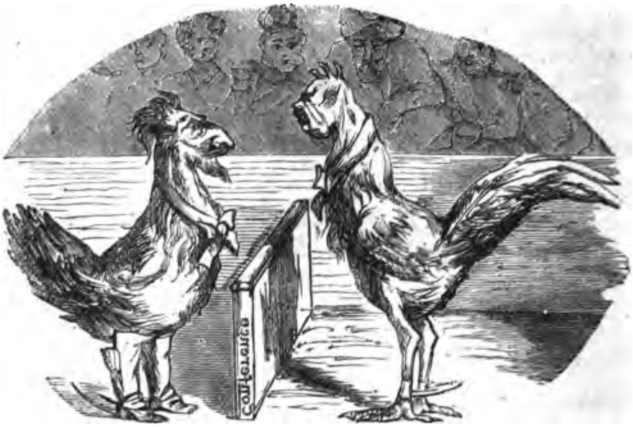

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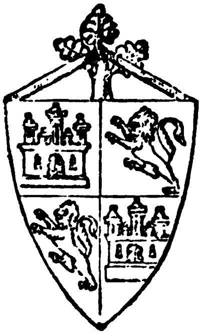

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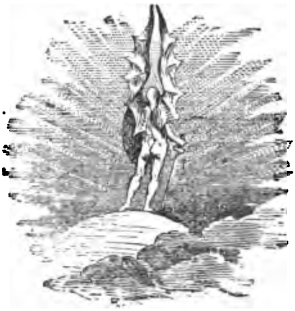

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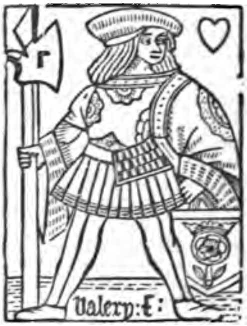

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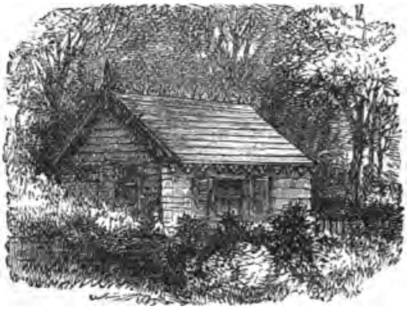

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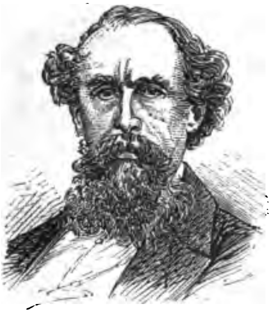

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